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If you can read this it means your covertape is missing! Make sure you ask your newsagent where it is.

ALSO ON DISK!

Want a disk version of the covertape? (6128 Plus owners take note) See the tape pages for ordering details.

Line u



up

Regulars

ACTION PACK

Two full games that will test your joystick and your reflexes to their limit. And some excellent utilities for the more serious amongst us. And don't forget the reader progs and game pokes...



1 Tankbusters

Driving around a 3D landscape shooting everything in sight – now that's what we call fun. There's probably some strategy in here too, but, er, we haven't actually looked for it yet...



2 Penguins

If you run this puzzle/arcade game at its slowest setting, you might JUST be able to keep up... you can blame Chris Surawy if it's too tough for you. His advice if that's the case? "Play something else!"



3 DMON

Trying to rescue some dodgy data, or just interested in what's going on in that disk of yours? This sector editor is what you need

4 JL-COPY

Copy tapes to disks, disks to tapes, disks to di... no, er tapes... or is it... no. Well you'll soon work out what does what, anyway



5 Type-Ins

All the reader progs from AA86, including CLOCK.BAS, EXIT.BAS, MISSILE.BAS, TELEBOOK.BAS and the essential Type-Ins companion Type-righter, to help you check your typing



6 Pokes

Crafty cheating routines for Wild West Seymour, Stuntman Seymour, On the Run, Castle Master and Glider Rider. No game is safe from the AA poking posse!

Just turn the page for all the details →→

ACTION PACK

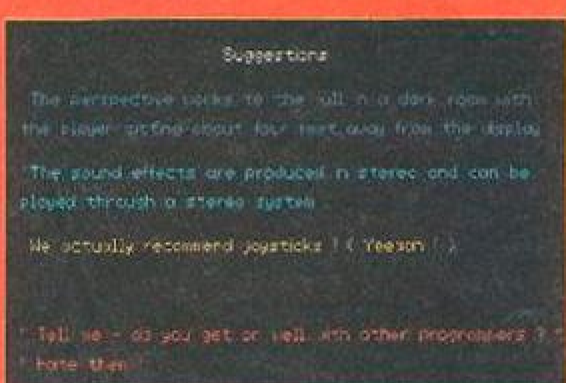
Tankbusters

Loading: Rewind to the start of side 1, then press CTRL + SMALL ENTER key. (Followed by PLAY and any key.) The menu screen will then load. Select *Tankbusters* and press the ENTER key.

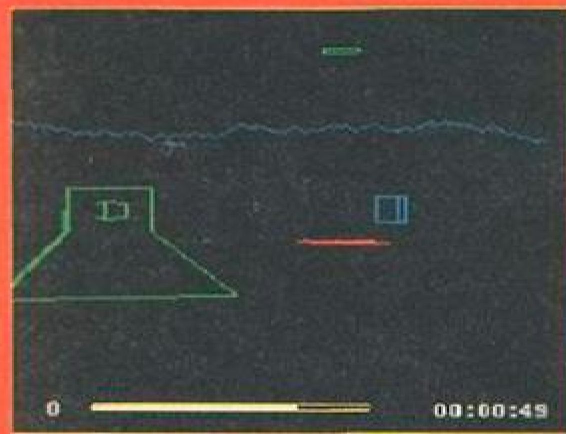
You must be playing at night. Yes, that's the reason. The distinctly nocturnal screen view couldn't be anything to do with the fact that this game uses vector graphics rather than filled 3D, could it?

Actually, it's just as well it does, because otherwise *Tankbusters* would run at a fraction of the speed. And since the game relies on speed, judgement and accuracy for its gameplay, that would be a bit of a problem.

If you want fancy graphics, play *Driller*, or any



Need instructions? The game provides them... after a fashion, that is.



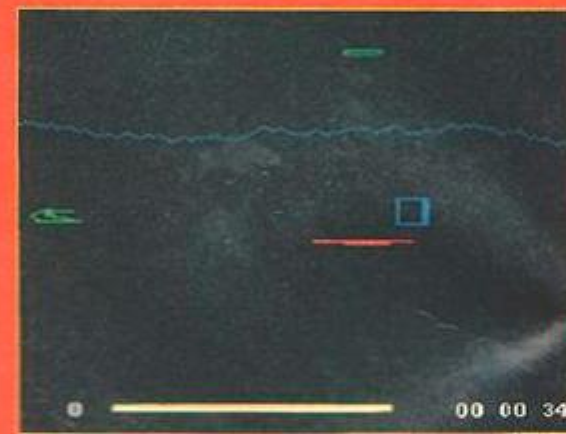
This is the last thing you see before the enemy tank on the left wipes you out.

one of the other *Freescape* plods... er, epics. But if you want fast, frantic blasting, you've come to the right place.

Or rather you haven't. Because if you don't get your backside (and your tank) in gear pretty darned quickly, you're going to get blasted to kingdom come.

The thing is, *Tankbusters* is dead easy to play. You can pick up the controls in no time, and get stuck right into the action. Your job is pretty simple. Destroy as many enemy tanks as possible. And? What do you mean, "and?". That's it. (How do you think Montgomery felt at El Alamein – he had to do it for *months*!) Ah, but wait a minute, the game instructions also advise you to "destroy the crystals to escape". How many crystals, though? Drop us a line if you find out.

The tanks in *Tankbusters* have a trick up their, er, barrels, by the way. Apart from shells, then

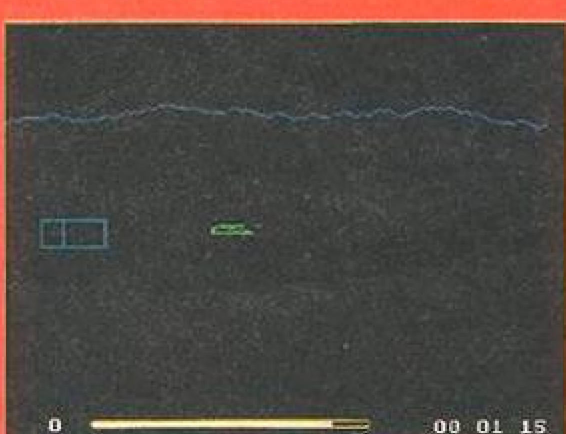


Oo look, there's a red refuelling square. But keep an eye on that tank in the distance.

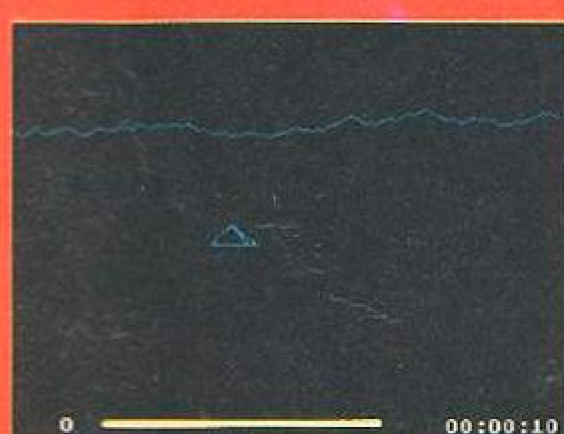
can also fire missiles. And if you want a bit of extra excitement, you can elect to see the action from the missile's point of view. They're guided missiles, by the way, so it's more interesting than it sounds.

There are a couple of things to look out for, apart from the enemy tanks. The planet surface has a few buildings on it which are useful for hiding behind, but a bit of a pain in the neck for learner drivers. There are also fuel dumps which you'll need to drive over now and again to replenish your tanks. Oh, and you can modify the appearance of the volcano on the horizon, we're told. Programmers are a funny bunch.

Tankbusters controls
Keyboard or joystick control
The keys can be reconfigured via the options screen



Those aren't crosshairs in the middle of the screen, they're your scanner.



"Shoot the blue crystals", the instructions tell you. Don't worry about it...



The red square in the middle is your bullet, missing the enemy tank by about a mile.

DMon

Loading: *DMon* must be loaded from BASIC, not from the main menu. To load it, rewind to the start of side 1, then type RUN"DMON.BIN".

By Ben Twijnstra

Wanting to look through game code and change the hi-score table? Or would you like to fool about with the directory to produce a message when you type "CAT"? It's possible, but difficult – unless you have a disk sector editor like this one, that is. *DMon*, the best PD sector editor you can get, offers more than the basic range of facilities, too.

To go into sector editing mode, select the drive your disk is in (or simply leave only one disk in – *DMon* will find it!) by pressing A or B, and follow up with ENTER. You can now move about the 40 tracks (usually with 9 sectors each) with cursor keys, press E to edit the current sector (split over two screens – TAB to swap), search for strings, wipe sectors, etc. A handy list of options is displayed on the right of the screen.

Or, if you like, simply return to the main menu. Here you can format your disks, clean up the directory (a clever process to prevent "erased" files ever being recovered, as well as sorting it into alphabetical order), and such like. One very interesting option is the ability to turn 'scanning' mode on, which gives the sector editor the option to deal with 'funny formats'.

By the way, if you're examining valuable disks with this utility, write-protect the disk – *AA* cannot be held responsible for you accidentally wiping your favourite game!

Penguins

Loading: Rewind to the start of side 1 of the tape and press CTRL + SMALL ENTER to load the main menu. Select *Penguins*, press RETURN and the game will load.

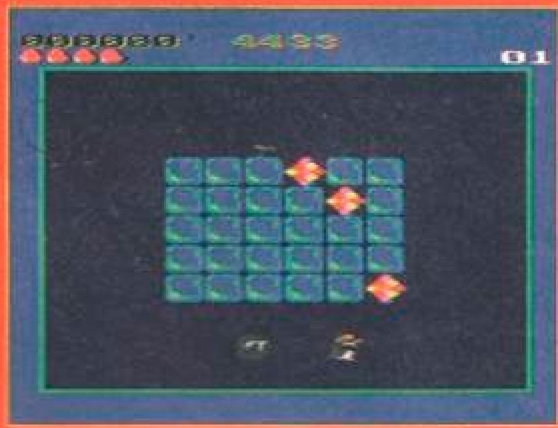
Mr Spock would say it was "not logical". Penguins collecting diamonds? For a start, there are no diamonds in Antarctica. And if there were, it seems very doubtful that the indigenous wildlife would spend its waking hours lining them up in rows. Especially when it became apparent there were some extremely fierce monsters about trying to stop them.

But these are no ordinary penguins. Their names are 'Wipeout' and 'Hardnut'. And they star in a one or two-player arcade game that varies in speed from very fast to stupidly fast. They inhabit a little landscape of sliding ice blocks... some of which contain monster eggs. Oh, and there are the diamonds, too.

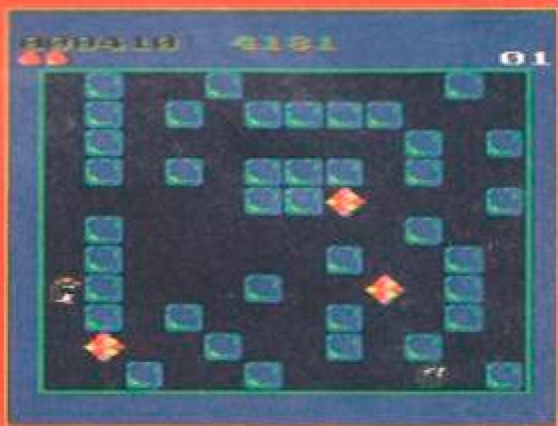
The idea is the line up the diamonds (by pushing them together) into either a vertical or horizontal line. Or, if that's too difficult (or not violent enough) just settle for killing all the monsters and their eggs. All this has to be accomplished within a time limit.

You push blocks and diamonds around by going up to them and pressing Fire and the appropriate direction key/joystick movement. If you can manage to push a block into a monster you kill it. Unfortunately, one of the remaining monster eggs hatches out soon afterwards.

Anything else you need to know? Oh yes. After Level Three, you have to fight off two monsters.



These monsters are horrible – they chase you everywhere. It's just not fair.



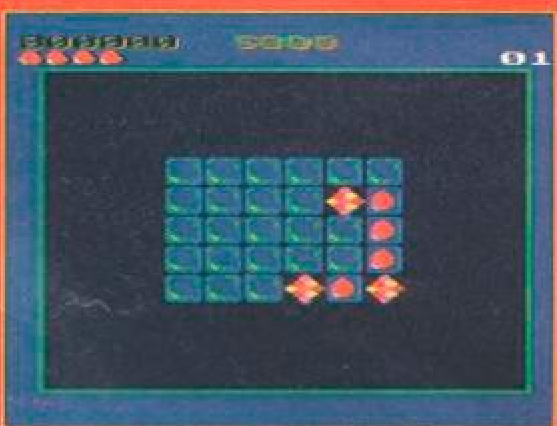
You're safe for a minute... now can you trap that monster by pushing some blocks?

And the second one can push blocks around, so if you've just worked out tactics for blocking monsters in... forget 'em!

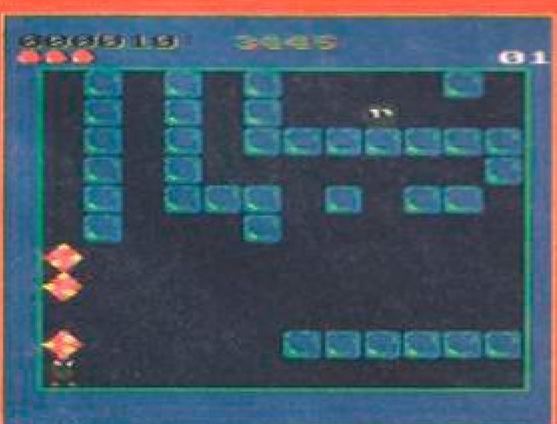
One more thing. If you slide a block into the border around the playing area, it makes it wobble for a few seconds. Any monsters next to it will be momentarily stunned.

Now then, do you think you deserve a cheat for this game. Hmm... dunno, we'll have to think about it... OK, then. If you redefine Wipeout's keys as the word GHOST, you switch off the collision detection. It makes the one-player game a bit wimpy, but it changes the character of the two-player game into an ice-block shoot-out. To get the game back to normal, define the keys as the word SOLID.

Controls for Penguins
Keyboard or joystick control
Keys can be redefined on the options screen.



At the start of each level you glimpse – briefly – the locations of the monster eggs.



Ha ha! We've trapped the monster and we've only got to push that diamond...



You're looking at a doomed penguin with about a millionth of a second to live.

How to load your covertape

Just pop the tape into your machine, making sure it's rewound to the start of Side 1, and then press CTRL + ENTER (or type RUN""), then press any key and the tape will start loading.

Within a few moments you get a menu screen. Choose the program you want using the Spacebar, then hit the Return key.

Tankbusters, *Penguins* and *DMon* are on Side 1 of the tape. *JL-Copy*, *Type-ins* and the game pokes can be found on Side 2.

- Note that *DMon*, *JL-Copy*, *Type-ins* and the game pokes are not loaded directly from the menu. Instead, you have to quit back to BASIC and use the RUN"(filename)" command.
- If you have a disk drive either built into your machine or plugged in, you will first have to type |tape to switch the computer to tape loading. You get the | character by pressing SHIFT+@. Then just proceed as normal.

Duff tape?

We go to great lengths to make sure that our covertapes work properly. However, if you still have difficulty, try this:

- Loading at several different volume levels if you're using an external tape recorder
- Cleaning the tape heads. This can be done with any commercially available cleaning kit
- Adjusting the cassette recorder's head alignment. The alignment screw is located just to the left of the tape head, and is usually accessible through a small hole. Turn it a fraction at a time with a jeweller's screwdriver. When the crispest sound is heard, the alignmnent is spot on.
- Tapping the cassette gently against a table edge – the spools may be sticking or jammed.

If you still can't get the tape to load then send the tape, along with a brief description of the problem and an SAE to:

AA88 Covertape Returns,
Ablex Audio Video Ltd,
Harcourt, Halesford 14,
Telford, Shropshire
TF7 4QD

Want a disk version?

The covertape contains its own tape-disk copying program. To transfer the programs to tape, simply follow the instructions on the tape.

- 464 owners with external 3-inch drives will have no problems, but 6128 owners will need a cassette player with a REM socket. Stopping and starting the tape manually is difficult.
- 6128 Plus owners who've had their machines modified to load from tape can transfer the programs to disk, *but must rewind to the start of the tape again before the transfer starts.*

You can also order a disk version of the covertape from our duplicators, Ablex. Snip off the coupon on the corner of this page and send it with a cheque/PO for £2.00 to:

AA88 Disk Offer, Ablex Audio Video, Harcourt, Halesford 14, Telford, Shropshire TF7 4QD



JL-Copy

This utility, by top Danish coder Jorn Lorentzen, lets you copy files from tape to disk, tape to tape, disk to disk, or whatever

Loading: *JL-Copy* cannot be run from the main menu but must be run from BASIC. Rewind to the start of side 2 then type RUN"JL-COPY.BIN".

Fast and reliable, *JL-Copy* is also short enough to keep a copy on all of your disks for "housekeeping". Just select option 1 from the initial menu, and then press an initial letter of any option to change it...

Option 2 is a disk back-up option, making an exact copy of what's on your disks. For keeping safety copies of your latest programming meisterwerk, or for backing up AA covertapes transferred to disks, it's incredibly useful. Don't expect to be able to copy your mates' games, though, because they're heavily protected to stop people doing this. Oh yes, and it's illegal, and if you get sent to Dartmoor for 50 years as a punishment don't come crying on our shoulders (partly because they won't let you out to see us anyway, but...).

Type-ins

Here we are, all the readers' programs from AA86 (the November issue). We've also chucked in Type-righter, the essential Type-ins utility!

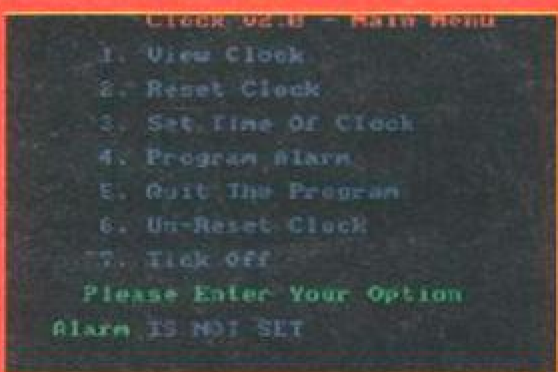
Loading: These Type-ins must be run directly from BASIC. Rewind to the start of side 2 and type RUN"filename". The filenames are printed below along with a description of the individual

CLOCK.BAS

Andrew Ratcliffe has produced a digital clock that can also chime on the hour. Not only that, you can use it as an alarm clock...

EXIT.BAS

It's only 3K long, and the graphics aren't exactly state-of-the-art, but Michael Hey's little arcade game is an addictive little effort. You have to cross the screen to the exit, avoiding moving walls and monsters!



Your CPC can actually make a very good clock! A bit of a big one, though...

MISSILE.BAS

Guided missiles, huh? Sheer luxury! When I were a lad, you 'ad to know 'ow to judge a missile... You do in this game too. The idea in Philip Melvin's game is to sink ships that move across the screen using missiles that fly through a long and graceful parabola before reaching their target.

TELEBOOK.BAS

What's your memory like? (Dunno, can't remember – ha ha!) Simon Moody might be able to help you out with his electronic address and phone number recorder. And it all works from menus!

TWRITER.BAS

Use this program to check your work when you're keying in type-ins from the magazine. Run Type-righter and every line of BASIC then generates a code on-screen which you can then check against the one printed in the magazine.

Pokes

Once again those incredible pokemasters have come up with a fantastic supply of up to the minute cheats for all your favourite games. To use these pokes, first of all RUN them (the filenames are quoted below) then load your game as normal

Wild West Seymour & Stuntman Seymour
STUNTMAN.GS, WILDWEST.GS

Street's Super pokist Graham Smith has been meddling with a couple of *Seymour* games and produced two tremendous pokes which give you infinite lives on *Wild West Seymour* and infinite lives on *Stuntman Seymour*.

On the Run & Castle Master
CASTMAST.AP, ONTHERUN.AP

Dunstable's demon poke master Andy Price has been giving a covertape classic the third degree and poked infinite time and invulnerability into the '85 game *On the Run*. Also, Andy has revamped his disk poke for *Castle Master* so that you can reap the benifit of infinite energy on the new Hit Squad tape version of the game.

Castle Master
CASTMAST.SP

But wait a minute, I have a page of pokes here from new contributor Stuart Price of Redruth, including one for *Castle Master* which stops damage being caused by the ghosts. Is it possible we might be in for a Price war in the *Cheat Mode* pages?

Glider Rider
GLIDER.RY

Ross Younger of Edinburgh has whipped up a covertape poke for us, infinite just about everyting you could possibly hope for (infinite time energy and bombs, and disabled lasers) on the AA86 covertape game *Glider Rider*.

Reaction



Three pages of letters this month – you lot have been keeping the GPO busy! Last month's plea to send no more poems went unheeded, though. Please, no more, we can't stand it! Rod can't, anyway, and he's the one who answers your mail...

Got it taped?

Over the years I have encountered occasional difficulties loading programs from various external cassette players. The main problem seems to be that more complicated codings are transmitted to fast for the computer to interpret. I have found almost universal success by placing a finger lightly over the cassette player idler spool during loading, thus slowing the tape speed slightly. (This may involve removing the cover over the cassette tape compartment, unless the tape can be loaded underneath the cover.) Light finger pressure is sufficient, and if you listen to the tone of the code going in, you can usually judge if you are slowing the tape too much.

Of course, all this is irrelevant if you are loading a 'turkey' anyway, and looking through the *AA* advertisements it can be tricky avoiding some of these if you cannot find the *AA* reviews. Back in *AA37* you printed a list of games reviewed in the first 36 issues with page numbers and ratings, which I have found very useful. I'm sure many readers would find a further index helpful. Perhaps you could offer a small payment (the only kind of payment *AA* ever offer) (*Well YOU won't be winning the star prize this month!*) to the reader who could compile a similar index for issue 37 onwards?

Martin Henderson
York



Problems loading tapes? Martin Henderson thinks he's put his finger on the answer...

Well that's the weirdest tape loading tip I've ever heard of. Has anyone else tried this? A word of warning – if you break your machine, don't come running to us! As Martin suggests, stick to LIGHT finger pressure. Cassette transport mechanisms are delicate things.

I agree, another games index would be a good idea. The only problem is, how would we publish it? AA has been going for over seven years now, and in that time has reviewed a LOT of games. Imagine it's an average of ten games per issue, that makes a total of nearly 900 titles! That sort of index would take up a lot of space inside the magazine, making it pretty unpopular with readers who weren't interested.

Of course, we could always put it on the covertape. Indeed, if someone were to produce a working game reviews database for our covertape, one which included original ratings and issue numbers, it could be worth, say, £50.

How about it? Anyone want to take the project on? The program would have to be quick in operation, reasonably polished-looking, and we'd want it to cover ALL back issues of AA, not just issue 37 onwards.

What's wrong with Margate?

I'm writing to you in deep desperation. My mother and father are fed up to their back ➤

An unexpected bonus!

I thought I would write and tell every 464 owner that DIHUNT *does* work on the 464. I own a 464 Plus and found it out when I was trying to load EYE.

By the way, are you looking for someone else to do the *Reaction* pages in *AA*? If you are, then look no further, as I'm wanting to work on your mag when I leave school. So bye bye Rod Lawson.

Carol Scott
Macnerry

Ooh, you cheeky Minx, Carol. No you can't take over Reaction. For a start, you spelt my name wrong. And I look nothing like the picture you sent in.

As for DIHUNT, I think I know what's happening. The old 464 had a different ROM chip to the 6128, so it couldn't run some 6128 programs. However, the 464 Plus has the same ROM as the 6128 Plus, so there are no problems. DIHUNT may work on Carol's 464 Plus, but it won't work on the old 464.

I really enjoy getting your magazine. From the moment my Dad gets it, his eyes are practically glued to it. When I finally get your mag I load the covertape on to my 464 Plus.

Now to the point. The November issue (AA86) had a type-in, DIHUNT, which was only supposed to work on the 6128. Yet it worked on my 464 Plus!

By the way, the *New Yorker* music demo was brill. You must congratulate the humans that helped Adam Peters to compose it.

On the whole I think that your magazine is great. I don't know what I would have done without it. The Amstrad 464 Plus is the fourth computer in our home. We have (sorry about this) a Sinclair Speccy ZX81 (old model), a ZX and RAM pack, and a Commodore 64. I'm sorry about any embarrassment I've caused!

Ashley Todd
Choppington

You've just found out one of the (relatively few) advantages of the 464 Plus over the old CPC464, Ashley. The Plus can't run some old tape games, because of differences in the machine's insides. Yet because it now shares the same ROM as the 6128 Plus, it has no trouble running software (provided it doesn't require 128K) that previously would only run on a 6128.

Thanks for your comments about the New Yorker demo. I've studied the photographs, though, and I don't believe any humans were involved.

Your list of computers was very interesting. I think you should open a museum.

teeth with my being addicted to my Amstrad CPC464. So much so that they have banned me for some large periods of the day from my beloved 464 so they can actually see my face. So I was faithfully looking at the November issue of *AA* (I have only been an Amstrad owner for three months) with my 464 under dust covers next to me, when I had a brainwave. Those lovely people at 30 Monmouth Street could do me a favour (wink, wink). Please can you plead with my eccentric parents to let me on my 464?

Simon Smith
Margate

Oh, that's a heartrending tale, isn't it? No? Oh, please yourselves...

Now then, Simon, you really will have to accept that there is a life outside your CPC. The only problem is that you live in Margate, so there's not much of one.

You mention those 'lovely people' at 30 Monmouth Street. Well, Simon, I've worked at 30 Monmouth Street for three years, and I can tell you that if there's a word that describes the people here, it's not 'lovely'.

Anyway, on to your main request. I will indeed plead with your parest. The next time they give you grief over your CPC, show them this piece of paper:

Dear Simon's Parents,

You do realise, don't you, that if you refuse to let Simon play on his computer whenever he wants, he's going to grow up a warped, twisted human being. What, he is already? Oh no, we're too late...

Streetfighter blues

When I saw the *Streetfighter II* preview in *AA84* I thought, 'it can't be done'. The CPC is the best 8-bit by far, graphics and sound-wise, but it doesn't even have a chance of producing a conversion of *SFII*. If the game was to be at all recognisable it should have been given to Gremlin, but unfortunately they don't go in for arcade convos. If they did, it could be much better, as US Gold stuff is usually done in 16-colour mode and is usually very blocky. US Gold have, unfortunately, never excelled in graphical excellence, apart from one or two exceptions. My fears were confirmed when I flicked through a friend's C64 mag. I know the C64 is crap, but it did give a basic idea what *SFII* would look like. It was terrible.

This put me in a state of manic depression. I am a *SFII* fanatic: I love the arcade version and the SNES version as well. It's great/excellent/tres bien/totally mondo! Almost as good as listening to Metallica at full volume and eating Frazzles, Kit-Kats, Spicy Chicken McCoys and Coke.

Another thing. Games in general are too easy. I got *Turbo the Tortoise* on Thursday. It is now



Street Fighter II looks like this on the Super NES. But what will it look like on the CPC?

Tuesday (*does your week work differently to ours in Swansea, then?*). I finished it without a cheat, and the ending was crap. The ending on *X-Out* was crap as well. I finished *Puzznic* on the day I got it (Monday) and *Crackdown* today. Games are too easy.

A frustrated games player
Swansea

For a start, we haven't seen hide nor hair of Streetfighter II. We know it's supposed to be on its way (we have seen a Speccy version running), but we're not going to hold our breath. After all, what happened to Indy 4?

I agree that mode 0 games tend to look blocky. This isn't US Gold's fault, it's a fundamental limitation of the machine. Gremlin's games look better because they use the higher-res (but lower colour) mode 1.

Personally, I think mode 1 is the best bet for many games. Sticking to just four colours is a small price to pay for the extra resolution.

Arcade coin-op conversions nearly always look terrible on home computers – especially the 8-bits. It's really just asking far too much. Again, it's not US Gold's fault. However, as long as the company chooses to concentrate on arcade conversions, it's going to get criticised for poor graphics. Really, they've made a stick for their own backs.

As for games being too easy, could it be that you're simply unusually gifted? (Yeah, we bet you just love seeing that in print.) Perhaps we should give you a job as a games reviewer on Amstrad Action? Or perhaps we should just give you a thick ear for being so cocky...

Better games, please!

Please help me. I am the very proud owner of a 464. I love playing games and have over 130. The music on the *AA86* covertape was brill, but was it really done on the *Amstrad*?

I have the games *Double Dragon* (which is a load of rubbish) and *Double Dragon 3*. Both these games are very slow. Would a 64K memory expansion help any? My friend has a Speccy and both these games go far faster on his computer, but the graphics and sound are terrible.

Finally, I would like to say something about the games scene. If you take a quick look through the last three copies of *AA* you will find that most of the new games (not the re-releases) have scored about 75%. So come on, software houses, what are you waiting for? You must see what a great computer the Amstrad is, so let's make Amstrad regrest they ever stopped making the CPC!

Robin Hooke
Glenanne

We're glad you liked the music demo on the covertape and yes, it WAS produced on the CPC. HOWEVER, the article was about making music with MIDI instruments, the professional way. MIDI

Printer choice



CPCs work any Epson-compatible printer

I have recently bought my second CPC464 (old model) – the last one had an unfortunate explosion in a fire. And I now realise what I have missed for the last couple of years. Now, thanks to my computer, my life is looking brighter. Also, the computer helps me in another way. I am in fact talking about saving money. Before I bought the 464 again I was always in various amusement arcades spending all my hard-earned money, but now, thanks to brilliant low-budget, big-name software at low prices, I end up with more cash at the end of the week. So you see I'm a lot happier. Thank you, Amstrad.

Now I need some help. Could you tell me where I can get a printer compatible with the 464? I've looked everywhere, but have just come up against dead ends. Please help me, then I can print my letters to you! Keep up the good work.

Martin Evans
Exeter

It's good to know your 464 has brought you such pleasure, Martin. As for choosing a printer, no problem! In fact it couldn't be easier, since the 464 needs an 'Epson-compatible' model – which covers just about every printer on the market (check with your supplier just to be sure). There's one other thing you need to specify. You want a printer with a 'parallel' interface. Again, this is the commonest type, so you should have no problems at all.

Games galore!

I recently read something about an address from where you could get GX4000 console games. I know another one! It is: **Humberston Computer Centre, 99 Fieldhouse Road, Humberston (0472 210601)**. They have a lot of disk titles too. If they don't have the game in stock, they will order it at no extra cost. They also have tons of Sega and Nintendo games (for all you traitors out there).

Paul Turner
Cleethorpes

Thanks for that useful bit of information, Paul.



Looking for Amstrad cartridge games? Here's an address for you...

instruments are expensive, and the computer is really only a tool for handling the sounds they produce. Once you've bought a MIDI interface, though, the CPC is as good as any other machine for handling MIDI instruments. You really could start a band with your CPC.

You're right about Double Dragon – not excactly fast, is it? Unfortunately, extra memory won't help you at all. The problem is with the way the games are programmed, not how much memory they run in.

Speccy versions of games DO seem to run faster than Amstrad versions. I have a theory about this. If the Amstrad version is in 16 colours, it will tend to run slower because the processor has more to do. If it's in four colours, the chances are it's a Speccy port. The Spectrum's Z80 does run slightly faster than the Amstrad's. In addition, not all programmers are terribly good at converting code from the Spectrum to the Amstrad.

Anyone else got any theories about this? You know where to write to if you have...

Football crazy

I have been a buyer of your magazine for five months. I would like to thank you for your covertapes. I especially liked *Glider Rider*, *City Slicker* and *On the Run*. But I must ask you why there are no football or sporting games on the covertape? There are plenty of games to choose from.

Mark Reed
Carlisle

Agreed, there are lots of sports games out there, any number of which would be ideal for the covertape. However, in order to put a game on our covertape, we first of all have to buy the 'rights' to the game from its publishers. And if they think the game still has a lot of life left in it, they'll want more money for the rights.

This leaves us pretty restricted as to the games we can use. You can blame the CPC budget market if you like! Because a game can be sold first at full price, then on a compilation, then on budget, they can carry on selling almost indefinitely. However, once they've been on an AA covertape, they're commercially 'dead.

Loads of trouble

I am having trouble with some of my friends' games – they don't seem to load. Is it my computer? They have the old Amstrad 464 and I have the new 464 Plus.

Gregory Grabowski
Basingstoke

Yes, Gregory, I'm afraid it is your computer. When Amstrad relaunched the CPC464 as the 464 Plus, they made a number of internal 'improvements'. Various technical complications now mean than some (not a high proportion, though) old tape games won't work on your 464 Plus.

On the good side, though, you can play cartridge games on your machine (when you can get them!) and there is no longer any compatibility problem between the 464 and 6128.

Is it a con?

Are you conning us, or do you really check your tapes before selling them? Because I bought AA86, but when I played the tape nothing happened – the menu would not come up and it also loaded straight the way through without stopping. Some of my friends who have also bought the issue have found their tapes do not load.

C. Cassidy
Cleveland

No, we're NOT conning you, Mr. Cassidy! What on earth would be the point? I can assure you that compared to the cost of sticking cassettes in boxes with printed cards and then sticking them to the front of magazines, the cost of actually putting software on these tapes is practically zero! Selling defective tapes would be stupid.

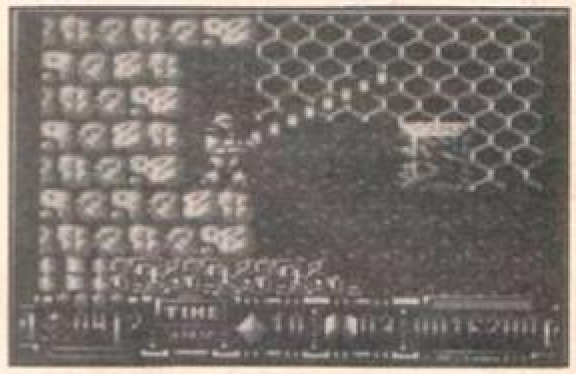
We've had no reports of any large-scale problems with AA86 covertapes. As ever, if your tape is faulty you should return it to our duplicators, Ablex (the address is printed in the magazine). The same applies to anyone with a tape problem. Once you've ruled out the standard problems, like sticking tape spools or dirty/misaligned heads, you should return your tape to Ablex. 6128 owners should note that loading the tapes via a lead with no REM connection is both difficult and unreliable unless you know what you're doing.

Multiload mayhem

I have got a CPC 6128 (with tape) and a GX4000. In some tape games I have got (*Turrican 2*, for example), after I have played them once they sieze up and I have to reload. I went round to my mate's and tried, and the same thing happened. Is it to do with the program, or the fact that we are connecting a tape and not using the REM socket?

Ross Potter
Haslemere

Exactly right, Ross. If you don't use a lead with a REM facility, you're going to have trouble with any multi-load game. You get round it by starting and stopping the tape manually when it's time to load in a new level. This can be decidedly tricky



Multiload tape games like Turrican 2 can be tricky to load on a 6128 without a REM lead.

and, although it's by no means impossible, it does take a bit of practice.

Can't you find a tape deck/lead with a REM facility? It will make your life a lot easier. Any decent computer shop should be able to help, either by supplying you with the appropriate lead, or by pointing you in the right direction.

Drop us a line!

If you've got something to say about *Amstrad Action*, the Amstrad computing scene or just computing in general, you know what to do! (Er, write to us, that is.) The address to write to ts as follows:

Reaction
Amstrad Action
Beauford Court
30 Monmouth Street
Bath, Avon BA1 2BW

We can't reply to your letters personally (please don't send us SAEs), but if what you've written in particularly interesting, amusing or helpful, we'll print it in the magazine, together with the Ed's reply.

Amscene

What's new on the Amstrad scene? Find out here! And if you've got some news for us, write to: Amscene, Amstrad Action, Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW

WAVE tunes in

Mail order suppliers WAVE are always digging up discontinued CPC peripherals and selling them at bargain prices. This time they've found some Amstrad TV tuners, devices which connect up to your colour monitor and turn it into a TV set!

The asking price is just £34.95, including £5.88 postage and packing. Which is a darned sight cheaper than a portable colour TV. You'd be well advised to check availability before ordering, though, since stocks may sell quickly. WAVE can be contacted on 0229 870000.

Bull fight console price war

Whatever happened to the Amstrad GX4000? Oh dear, some memories are almost too painful to bear... especially if you were one of the unfortunate people to have paid out the full whack of £100 when they first went on sale.

You see you'll be especially choked to find out that a company called Bull Electrical has got hold of around 1000 GX4000s and are knocking them out at £15 each! Bull also have copies of the Epyx sports compilation which they're selling at £10 (it originally retailed at £25).

The last time Bull got in stocks of the console, they sold out in days, so if you're interested you'd better phone first to check availability. The number to call is 0273 203500.

Future show makes the headlines!

Did any of you lot get along to the Future Entertainment Show early in November? If you didn't, you missed a whole host of spectacular gaming events and displays. Including the finals of the Future Games Championship, a free virtual reality demonstrater and heaps more.

Mind you, you also missed a bit of a crush on the Saturday. Officials had to close the doors at one stage because so many people were trying to get in. The national papers carried loads of stories about people being crushed, flattened, vapourised, mangled and more, but they were just a tiny bit exaggerated, to say the least. However, it does go to show how staggeringly popular the event proved.



The Future Entertainment Show really did demonstrate future entertainment...

Not surprisingly, there was little CPC-specific stuff at the show – a reflection of the fact that console-mania is taking over. Nevertheless, there was heaps of stuff to see for *any* computer owner interested in the technology of the future.

Since this show was so popular, next year's (oh, yes, there are going to be lots more from now on) show will be at Olympia, where there will be about 30% more space.

The winner of the Future Games Championship, by the way, was Allan Brett, a 17-year-old student from Nottingham. He walked away with a cool £10,000! What, you didn't enter? Bet you wish you had done now! Runner-up was 26-year-old Tony Eatin from Stafford.

Time to learn something new?

Rickett Educational Media are just about the biggest distributors of educational software anywhere. Indeed, their directories are now growing so large that they've adopted a new approach and just released a new Winter '92 'bulletin' listing all their latest lines.

The bulletin covers software for all computer formats, so you'll have to dig in a bit to find the Amstrad stuff. But there is quite a lot of it to be found amongst the other formats.

To get a copy of either the Winter '92 Bulletin or Rickett's full directory, give them a call on 0460 57152 and say *Amstrad Action* sent you.

CPC gets the bird

There are various database programs available for the CPC, both commercially and in the public domain, but only one that we know of – *Probird* – designed specifically for ornithologists.

Probird can be used by both novices and experts, supports up to 200 bird names and lets you record up to 9 sightings, listing the date and location for each.

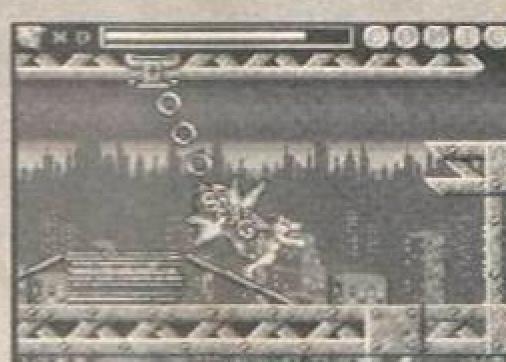
Ordering a copy will cost you £11, but most of this is made up of materials, documentation and postage and packing. If you just order the program itself, it can work out considerably cheaper.

Find out more from C. Jackson, 37 Essex Road, Stamford, Lincs PE9 1LG.

Ocean stick their nose in for charity

Ocean are teaming up with Comic Relief to produce a 'Red Nose' game. It's called *Sleepwalker*, and Ocean are hoping to raise half a million pounds from sales of the game.

Sleepwalker won't be available on the Amstrad, unfortunately, but Amstrad owners can still do their bit on Red Nose day. You see the idea is that you get friends or workmates to sponsor you in a gameplaying marathon! A special telephone number will be set up in association with Comic Relief so that you can register your money-raising efforts officially. In the meantime, contact Ocean on 061 832 6633 for more info..



Every copy of Sleepwalker sold means more money for Comic Relief.

Mansell falls behind

Nigel Mansell's Grand Prix career looks to be finally over. Next year he goes Indy racing in the States, which as far as GP fans are concerned is like Egon Ronay opening a hamburger stall...

Meanwhile, Amstrad owners are still waiting for the Amstrad version of the official Nigel Mansell Grand Prix game. And not only Amstrad owners, either – *Amstrad Action* is waiting too!

We had expected to be able to review they game by now (as you may have gathered from our *Next Month* and *Action Zone* pages), but you know what they say about "the best laid plans of mice and men." More news when we have it.

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SIREN SOFTWARE

Amstrad Action's Top Ten games of '92





1 Lemmings 97%
What can we say? Utterly addictive gameplay, loads and loads of levels and lots of laughs too. The game many reckon to be the finest ever written finally makes it on to the the CPC.

2 Blues Brothers 95%
The film is great, and so's the game. It follows a few years after the film, though, and the plot's got little in common with the film's, but it's still an excellent platform arcade game.

3 Titus the Fox 94%
Software house Titus finally includes its own mascot in a game. The result is a superb-looking arcade scroller with tons to see and do.

4 Hudson Hawk 94%
No-one seemed to like the film much, but Ocean's conversion is a corker. It's all done in the Amstrad's hi-res four-colour mode and the detail is excellent.

5 Stryker 93%
Why does this budget game look so much like *Switchblade*? Because it's written by the same programmers! Superb exploration and platform action and extra colours on Plus machines!

6 Space Crusade 91%
Gremlin's conversion of the board game *Hero Quest* was great. *Space Crusade* is the follow-up, and it's even better. Tactical wargaming at its best.

7 Paperboy 2 91%
The original *Paperboy* struck a chord with everyone who's ever had to deliver a newspaper. The sequel has more bells and whistles but just the same arcade-style fun as the orginal.

8 WWF 90%
Pro wrestling is big business at the moment. Ocean's grappling game is a very good two-player beat-em-up with lots of moves and lots of action.

9 Addams Family 90%
They're spooky and they're kooky... but there's nothing wrong with Ocean's conversion of the TV classic. Some tough but fun platform action over loads of levels.

10 Potsworth 90%
Possibly Hi-Tec's finest hour (*The Jetsons* was their worst). Five excellent levels of arcade action, each featuring a different *Potsworth* character. Will Hi Tec resurface? Only time will tell. We certainly *hope* they do...



Action Z

1993 is here! (Actually, better check your watch 'cos it might not be yet.) It's that time of year when you sing Auld Lang Syne, make some New Year's Resolutions and look back on the year gone by. We're not going to sing, we're incapable of sticking to any resolutions, but we are going to look back on a whole year of Amstrad Action...



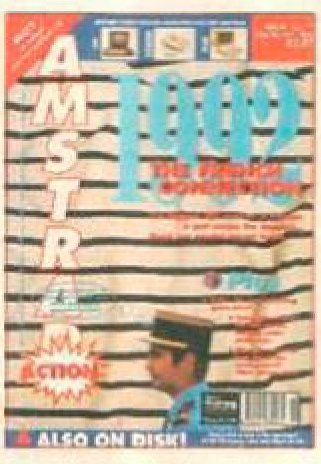
January

There's an old saying: "The more things change, the more they stay the same." Hmm... last January's cover rattled on about the brand new *Dizzy Collection*. And now this Xmas, could Codemasters have done it again? *Nearly*. They hijacked the cover of the December issue rather than the January one. We also previewed the new Codies character Steg. Whatever happened to Steg? He still hasn't appeared in any game.

This was the issue where we gave away *Graphic Adventure Creator*, possibly the most popular covertape prog we've ever featured. Over 500 people ordered copies of the original instruction manual which we'd had to reprint specially.

This was also the issue of the *AA Christmas Pantomime*. We never did get to play it at the Palladium, although quite a crowd gathered outside the Bath council offices where we'd fixed up the photo shoot. Another Chrimbo Special was the Joanne Brown story in *Reaction*. We've had many requests to do another story about Joanne Brown and her horse Silver, but none from people who could honestly claim to be sane...

Best game of the issue? We couldn't like *The Simpsons*, no matter how hard we tried. *Pit Fighter* was dire. *Outrun Europa* was an extremely pleasant surprise.



February

In this issue we carried out one of our periodic forays into the French CPC market (it's a good excuse to nip over the Chanel and get some Channel... er, or is it the other way round?). The cover took ages to put together, consisting of a cutout of a gendarme's head and one of Angela Neal's stripey T-shirts.

The 'Crap Poem of the Month' spot made its first terrifying appearance in *Reaction*, and we had four full-price games in for review... including the long-awaited *Battle Command* from Ocean, a game they'd been advertising since Adam Peters was in short trousers (a few months previously). *Paperboy 2* and Ocean's *WWF* got the biggest thumbs-up, though.

This month also saw the start of the *GAC* competition, arranged in conjunction with the previous month's covertape giveaway. The readers had to write an adventure based on the exploits of the *AA* team. The entries are just starting to come in now...

We also printed one of the largest surveys ever carried out in *Amstrad Action*. We asked you to fill in two whole sides of A4, and Rod then spent weeks analysing the results. What did we find out? Principally, that *AA* readers are two-thirds wagglers and one-third wireheads... er, two thirds of you like games, one third are more 'mature', serious users.



March

A *Space Crusade* demo on the covertape – hurrah! We also managed to squeeze on two full games as well – *Total Eclipse II* and *Shockway Rider*. How did we do it without busting the *AA* budget wide open? We, er, didn't. We won't mention it if you don't

Inside we carried news about Wacci, the long-running CPC user group. It had hit financial trouble, but was rescued by a kind of members' co-operative which took over the magazine and software library, injected some fresh cash and is today running an extremely healthy little club. Well done, chaps.

We also ran a feature on public domain software – what it is, who writes it, where to get it and where you stand with the law. We must have

Zone Special

inspired loads of CPC owners, because the public domain is now just about the biggest area of interest in today's CPC scene.

And Mindscape released *Captain Planet* on the CPC, computing's first 'green' game. It was green all right, like those horrible smelly things that you discover behind the cooker during your annual clear-out. We gave it 37% because it was in a good cause.



April

It was time for a little redesign, we decided. So we put our then Art Editor Angela Neal on the case and she came up with a new-look *Technical Forum* section which incorporated all the serious, techie features we wanted in a compact, logical layout that brought together our traditional questions-and-answers, Alex van Damm's beginners' section and any reviews of serious product.

It wasn't all serious stuff, though – we had another two complete games on the covertape! *Ranarama* was a weird but good puzzle/arcade game that Rod was useless at and *Maze Mania* was a good but weird arcade/puzzle game. That Rod was useless at. Rod was also useless at that issue's Mastergame, *The Blues Brothers*. He wasn't having a good month.

The games theme carried on into that issue's Buyers' Guide, where we got Linda Barker of *Your Sinclair* fame to round up all the most popular joysticks on the market and work out which one was the best.



May

Oooohh... spooky stuff. Rod decided the best way to illustrate the new Codies game on the cover was to get hold of a skull and get our photographer to add some eerie lighting. Maryanne didn't like this at all. It was a real skull, one which we'd borrowed from a museum. It had a really grisly history too. Even though it was one we made up specially...

Anyway, the whole point of this was that a bunch of programmers producing *Stryker in the Crypts of Trogan* for Codemasters knew an awful lot about the new Plus machines. So much so that they were able to access the extra colours and sprite-handling hardware of these machines to produce better graphics than ever seen before on Amstrad tape/disk games. We hoped other publishers would soon follow suit, but they haven't yet, alas.

This was the month that *AA*'s long-standing rival *Amstrad Computer User* was closed. The ed went off to work on a Sega magazine somewhere else and the mag slid beneath the waves with barely a ripple. And yet this wasn't the end of the story. The company that had produced *ACU* then launched a new Amstrad mag called *CPC Attack*. We weren't especially kind about its prospects at the time.

Apart from the normal game reviews, we also reviewed and rated all 24 known Amstrad cartridge games to date. Oh, and we first previewed *Nigel Mansell's Grand Prix* in May. Eight months later, it *still* isn't finished (even though Nigel Mansell is, ho ho... sorry, Nige).



June

In June we ran a DTP (Desktop Publishing) special – one of the most popular serious CPC applications. Not only did we print a three-page feature on setting up and running a fanzine, together with quotes from three specialists, we also did a fanzines round-up and a Buyers' Guide to DTP software. Amazing, huh? You can't say we're not thorough.

We were a bit dismayed to find out the covertape game *Forbidden Planet* also contained some rather forbidden language, but were relieved to find out it only came to light if (a) you typed very rude things into the hi-score table or (b) hacked into the code and went through it with a microscope.

We loved the *Addams Family* so much we moved heaven and earth to get a demo on the covertape, then got told off by the readers because it was 128K only (the game itself, that is, not just the demo). Can't win, can you?

This month we had one of our periodic communications from a German gentleman by the name of Fritz Obermeier. Fritz is always producing strange and exciting add-ons for the CPC. On this occasion he was touting a £380 hard drive for the CPC and a £150 512K RAM expansion. Hmm... those Germans must think we've got money to burn.

Oh yes, and we also printed the results of our survey. And very interesting they were too. Dr. Nigel Jackson of Morecambe said, "A lot of the serious stuff might as well be written in Hebrew, in invisible ink, back to front." Don't fall ill in Morecambe.



July

Is it the greatest game ever written? *Lemmings* finally appeared on the CPC after it had turned up on every other format under the sun first (except the games consoles, ho ho). Everyone thought it was. Except Rod, that is, who carried on muttering about *Laser Squad* long after everyone else had stopped listening. We even had a *Lemmings* demo on the covertape. Sorted or what? (Don't answer that.)

What with the *Lemmings* demo hogging all the glory, *Dragontorc*, that month's complete game, went completely unnoticed. Which was probably for the best, really. And Richard Fairhurst's DTP program *PowerPage* came in with not so much a fanfare as a polite cough. A pity, really, because it's an excellent program. Richard went on to write a three-part *PowerPage* tutorial for us.

We also had two bits of good news in *Amscene*. An Italian manufacturer had restarted the production of the ever-more-scarce 3-inch disks used by the CPC, and CPC enthusiasts Thomas Defoe and Bob Taylor released a new, 'alternative' Firmware Guide. Amstrad had long since ceased to publish the official version – a bit of a problem, really, because it contained much essential info for programmers. Oh, and Goldmark produced a new 8-bit printer port, another widget that had become impossible to find. All in all, a pretty good month for our serioso readers.



August

In August, following growing complaints from the readers that they were finding it hard to get hold of Amstrad software, we hopped on a cross-channel ferry to suss out the French scene. We found shelves stacked with CPC games in an Auchan hypermarket not far from Boulogne and came away much encouraged. It later turned out that Menzies use the same disk/tape duplication system as the French and that they may well be the best bet for ➤

beleaguered CPC games fans.

Ace technical boffin Richard Fairhurst took over *Technical Forum* from Adam Waring, who was off round the world. He still isn't back, by the way, and no, we're not joking. Last we heard he was trying to start a CPC user group in Outer Mongolia.

We were mightily impressed with the budget release *Turbo the Tortoise*, then dismayed to find out the publishers Hi Tec were not going to be producing it due to financial troubles, then all happy again when Codemasters took it over. Phew.

Ah yes, and we also managed to reprint the entire *Type-Ins* section from the month before. People thought we did it on purpose just to save money.



September

Last year, 'multimedia' was the word on everybody's lips. This year it's 'virtual reality'. The thing is, virtual reality is nothing new. Most computer games are 'virtual', in that they simulate real worlds. We took the whole virtual reality concept apart, examined it thoroughly and then put it back together again... although it didn't quite work properly after that.

We also ran the first *AA* hardware project for yonks and yonks. It told you how to make a lightpen for under £4. Maplins promptly went and discontinued one of the principal components. It took us a month to find an alternative supplier, by which time the *AA* phone lines were glowing red with calls from irate readers.

Anything else? Oh yes, Rod went up to visit Peter Brunning, mastermind behind the *Brunword* word processor and its latest (and possibly final) incarnation, the *Brunword ROM*. Instant loading you'd expect from a ROM package. But you wouldn't expect instant, as-you-type spellchecking from *any* package. Amazing.



October

This issue featured one of the most controversial covers we've ever done. Small children were terrified. Old ladies fainted in the street. Traffic was brought to a standstill. Yes, this was the cover featuring the gorgeous, pouting etc. (NOT!) Adam Peters, lead singer of the rather rapidly-formed band Urban Dance Terrorists.

The reason? A MIDI music special which, even though we say so ourselves, we think we did rather well.

Apart from that we got Richard Fairhurst to start a *PowerPage* tutorial. He wrote the darned program so, we realised, he ought to be able to explain how to use it. This was all part of Rod's grand strategy. Since CPC software is getting harder to find, *AA* wouldn't just tell you which was the best product, it would actually put it on the covertape... and then explain in great detail how to use it! Smart bloke, that Rod Lawton. Despite the beard.

This was the issue we carried the news that amazed everyone, even us. Despite the predictions that the CPC market was collapsing, despite the software housespulling out, despite talk of 'the recession', *Amstrad Action's* circulation showed an *increase*! "If it goes on like this, I'm going to be editing *Amstrad Action* when I'm old and grey!" quipped Rod. We didn't have the heart to tell him he already was.



November

The nights were drawing in, the winds were getting colder... but there was a cheery glow at the *Amstrad Action* hearth and we took a look at Alternative Software, who are producing simply loads of games for the CPC, most of them TV character licences.

We also followed up the previous month's music article with a practical step-by-step guide to making music. And, not content with telling you how to do it, we *showed* you what you could do by putting a music demo on the covertape. *New Yorker (edit)*, it was called, and most of our readers, it seems, were impressed.

Future Publishing as a whole was building up to a computing first – the Future Entertainment Show at Earls Court. Not much there for CPC owners, true, but a great show for computing fans nonetheless.

Oh, and Adam Peters wrote a special feature on ways to make money with your CPC. "Lend us a fiver," he said, afterwards. "Get lost," said Rod, who was already working on a follow-up on how not to lose it.



December

December... ah, Christmas carols, trees, decorations, horrible deadlines we're never going to be able to meet. Everyone's winding down for Christmas, we're winding up!

Unbelievably, Dizzy is just about to star in his twelfth game! We do a special profile on one of computer gaming's most enduring characters. And what about *Football Manager 3*, then? *FM2* set the standards so we were really looking forward to the sequel. We shouldn't have bothered.

The main news this month was the demise, after only six issues, of *CPC Attack*. "Gone, but not forgotten," they say. In the case of *CPC Attack*, we suspect that's *half* right...

And so we reach the end of another year. Unbelievably, *Amstrad Action* is now seven years old, which must make it one of the longest-running computing titles ever. And the amazing thing is that circulation figures have hardly budged since the start. Which only goes to prove one thing. That CPC owners are amongst the most loyal there are. People aren't loyal without a reason, though. And that reason is that the CPC is simply the best-loved home micro on the market. Kind of brings a lump to your throat, doesn't it?

... and the top five turkeys of 92!

1 Count Duckula 3%
We've never seen anything like it. It looks like a Speccy port on a bad day. It moves like an arthritic snail and it's almost unplayable. What did Alternative think they were doing, for heaven's sake?

2 The Jetsons 10%
We reviewed this in the same issue as the excellent *Potsworth*. What a differece! *The Jetsons* was dreadful. We have a building full of professional games players, and none of them could get off Level One!

3 Super Space Invaders 34%
Why did we all love this game in the arcades? It was simple, addictive and fast. *Super Space Invaders* is complex, boring and slow.

4 Baby Jo 35%
Loriciels were tempted to distribute this French game in the UK. It was cute, and looked terrific, but it was just far, far too slow for a platform game.

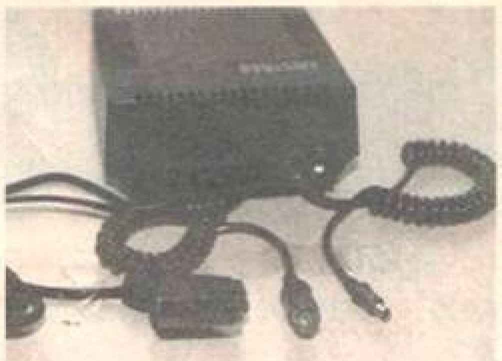
5 Captain Planet 37%
We tried hard to like this one, we really did. But a combination of unfathomable gameplay, indifferent graphics and utter tediousness finally wore us down.



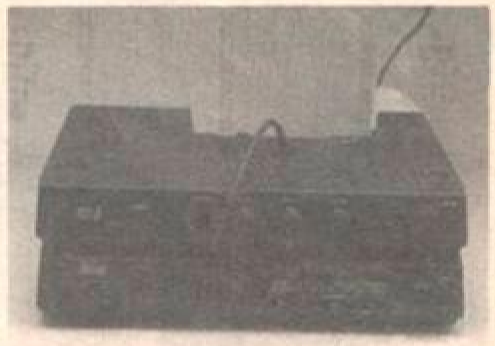
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CF2 3"

Box of 10 Amsoft

The Sho

Gremlin ■ 0742 753423 ■ £10.99 cassette, £15.99 disk

So what's in for me, then?

Knowledge, they say, is its own reward. But that's not going to wash with some four-year old. When they finish a level, they want more than just a warm glow of self-satisfied contentment. So, *The Shoe People* works on a rewards and forfeit basis. Get all the questions right and something funky happens. Get it wrong, and something, um, not quite so funky happens. You gotta use a bit of psychology, see!



Clever clogs at Sergeant Major Works It Out get the see the flag go all the way up the pole. The more dimwitted child has to settle with seeing it at half-mast.



What kid doesn't love splashing in puddles? (Spotty, swotty ones, that's who.) Wellington really goes for it if you get the balance just right.



Yeah, well, sometimes this reward thing backfires. It's actually more fun in Charlie's Big Day to get something wrong and watch him get drenched.

Can no-one produce an educational game to rival the Fun School Series? DAVE GOLDER puts on his thinking cap to find the answer...

Have you ever looked down at your grimey Nikes, well hard Docs or incredibly naff Jesus sandals and thought, "Hey, they'd make really good cartoon characters that would be a world wide success"? Nope? Never mind, you're too late anyway. Some bloke called James Driscoll has already done it, and made a mint out it. And he's probably made a bit more by agreeing to let his creations be turned into a computer game. Yep, *The Shoe People* are here and trying to achieve that most difficult of tasks – making learning fun. And, surprisingly, they succeed.

The Shoe People is aimed at four to six-year olds and comprises six activities that help introduce kids to simple spelling, addition and shape recognition. There's even a bit of drawing and painting thrown in for good measure. It's excellently presented, with some superb graphics that faithfully reproduce the characters from the TV series and books, and a healthy dose of childish

Six of the best (well five, actually...)



Trampy Visits His Friends

Trampy wants to visit a few mates. But because he's smelly they don't particularly want him round, so to make things more difficult for him they ask him to identify a few objects. On the easy level the player has to match the object on the ground to the one in the panel. On the harder level the name of the object has to be spelt out.



Sergeant Major Sorts It Out

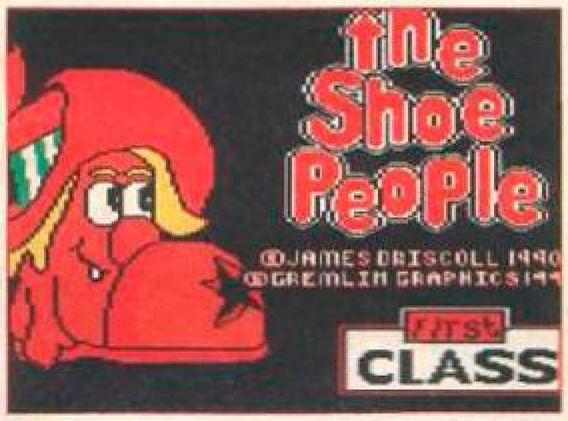
The Serg, miffed that he can't get Baby Bootee interested in a bit of wholesome yomping, instead bullies the poor child into helping him sort out some abstract shapes and colours that he's managed to muddle up. He is a silly old sergeant, isn't he, children? The ideas is that similar objects have to go on the same shelves.



The Great Alphabet Robbery

Sneaker's nicked loads of letters 'cos he knows someone down the market who pays good money for second-hand alphabets. But PC Boot is hot on his trail. Sneaker's got a hole in his swag bag and so keeps dropping letters. On the easy levels the player just has to match up the letters, but on the harder levels they have to work out anagrams.

e People



The Shoe People is for younger kids only, but it does its job very well indeed.

humour (slapstick, in other words).

Five of the activities are simple games while the final one, Margot's Magic Colouring Book, is a fairly basic art program. They're all pretty straightforward to use, but it would be still be best to have a grown-up around to encourage and advise. All the games have been designed in accordance with the National Curriculum and range in levels from easy to hard. So, for example, in The Great Alphabet Robbery, the easy levels care just concerned with letter recognition, while the later ones require knowledge of spelling.

The best of the activities include Charlie's Big Day (despite the fact that they don't use the possessive 's' in the title – okay, that's a bit of advanced grammar, but in educational stuff it'd be nice to get these things correct) in which the child has to remember an ever-growing sequence of tricks. It's also the activity that makes the best use of sound – the one area in which *The Shoe People* falls down. The same sound effects and jingles are used throughout, to the extent that any reasonably sane parent might possibly want to strangle their child if they hear that darned fanfare again. But in Charlie's Big Day, the sonics are used well, and help with the learning process.

Also good are Wellington Goes To The Park, which introduces simple Maths, and half of Margot's Magic Colouring Book, the Painting half, where the kids have to colour in pictures. Hey! it's not educational, but after a hard sesh at the keyboard the sprogs need to let their hair down. It's a shame that the drawing package is a bit of a let-down, though. It is extremely limited, and the fact that nice wiggly lines are next to impossible to produce kids could soon become bored with it – I mean, how are you supposed to make smoke come out of chimneys with straight lines?

There are no time limits on any of the games, which means that parents can help their kids cheat... erm, give them a bit of help and encouragement. And, for a change, the manual is very well-written with the Shoe characters themselves interjecting and giving hints and tips. Not that the kids'll be interested in the instructions – they'll be more interested in the free *Shoe People* book that comes with the package.

It is a multi-load, but not a too painful one. For cassette users, after the initial load, the games are all arranged logically on side two of the tape, and none of them take too long to get going – a chance to the read the book, perhaps?

The Shoe People is well up there with the latest *Fun Schools*. I'm still not sure about the whole concept of talking shoes, though...

VERDICT

GRAPHICS — 90%
Great stuff. The characters have been excellently transferred to the computer – it's bright and brash

SONICS — 65%
The only real let down – not enough variety and the comb and paper fanfares get really irritating.

GRAB FACTOR — 83%
The general cartoony feel, humour and the rewards system should make it a hit with young kids.

STAYING POWER — 80%
The limited number of words is a bit of a shame, but it's still got plenty of replay power.

Shoe People is such good fun, with any luck the kids won't even realise it's doing them some good at the same time!

RATING 85%



Wellington Goes To The Park

I've never been too keen on blue wellies. They're usually worn by the geekiest of kids. Red's much cooler. But Wellington's not a bad sort. All you have to do is balance up the seesaw and he has a good splash in the puddle. This game even includes a bit of simple maths when you have to balance two dice with the number at the other end of the seesaw.



Charlie's Big Day

Charlie likes to put on a bit of a show. He was turned down by the Chippendales so turned to magic instead. So far he's only learnt seven tricks, but he tries to disguise the fact by performing them in different orders and hoping you don't notice. In this game the aim is to remember the sequence, or, on the harder levels, to work out what Charlie will perform next.



Margot's Magic Colouring Book

There's two parts to this; one of them's great fun, the other is the worst thing about *The Shoe People*. Draw is a simple art package that is so limited it's virtually pointless. Small kids will have a very hard time making any sense of it. Paint, however, is great fun. There are five black and white pictures to colour in and the painting system is simple and fun.

Amstrad Action Superstore

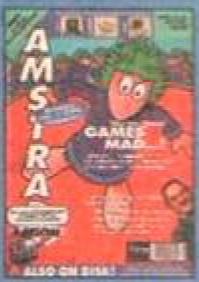
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Technical Forum

TOP TIPS

Works better

The *Worktop* program (*AA85* covertape) is indeed a nifty piece of code. However, there is a slight bug in that if you swap disks in drive B: and try to renew the file display you get a disk read error. Luckily, the solution is simple: alter the GOSUB 6250 near the end of line 305 to GOSUB 6260 and all is well.

I you don't like the disk drives whirring all the time, remove the statement EVERY 200 GOSUB 64000 at the end of line 220, and add the following line:

```
270 IF tx<5 AND ty>2 AND ty<9 THEN GOSUB
    64000
```

Now the motors will only be switched on when the icon for either drive A: or drive B: at the top left of the screen is clicked on.

Finally, to default to joystick operation, change the initial values of kl, kr, ku, kd and kf in line 210 to 74, 75, 72, 73 and 76.

Rod Shaw
York

Note this well

As you reviewed the Amstrad NC-100 Notepad last issue, I thought I'd offer a few tips.

1. If you want to transfer files from the Notepad to the CPC or vice versa you will need an RS232 interface and a null modem cable. Finding an RS232 could be a bit tricky but they are sometimes seen in the pages of Micro Mart (*and AA Small Ads – RF*) for about £20-£25. A null modem cable should set you back about £10. The final thing you will need is some comms software. There are a few PD programs operating mainly under CP/M. (*You might get software with the interface – RF*)
2. There is a bug in the Mail Merge element of the Word Processor. In order to read data into your template file you must issue a >DF command: unfortunately, this does not work unless you omit the second quotation mark.
3. Before you start filling your Notepad with files, set the passwords. Use a four letter word that you won't forget, as you can accidentally press the Function and Menu keys, activating the password function. If you haven't set one you cannot get into the Notepad, meaning a complete reset, losing all of your data.

Andy Gibbons
Peterborough

Problems with your computer or a piece of software? Or maybe there's something about the Amstrad you just don't understand? Either way, Amstrad Action's technical boffin Richard Fairhurst is here to help. Write to: Technical Forum, Amstrad Action, Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW

Merging madness

? Did you notice that in *AA86* you were called "Techical Forum"?

I've had my CPC for nearly 8 years and it's still great, however I've never had any need to use the MERGE command much – this is probably because it never works! I recently wanted to use XREF from the October 1991 issue, which requires you to merge XREF into memory after the program you want to run it on. Unfortunately, as with all my attempts to MERGE, I get the error message "EOF met". Why? (I have a disk drive attached.)

Also, is it possible to transfer a CPC BASIC program to an IBM PC, as an ASCII file, amend the program, and then resave?

Jonathan Went
Highbury

! *There is a bug in the 464 firmware which prevents the MERGE command from working properly on disk machines. However, if you resave the program to be merged in ASCII format (e.g. SAVE "XREF",A) and then MERGE, it will work.*

As long as your IBM BASIC supports loading ASCII files, there should be no problem in transferring programs – although they may need major modification to sound and graphics commands, especially. The easiest option is to use Locomotive BASIC 2 on the PC!

Questions, questions

? **1.** Can you make the 6128 IBM-compatible? If so, how, and how much would it cost?
2. What is an RS232 interface for?
3. Where can I get a copy of SOFT 971 for CP/M Plus?
4. Can you use any mouse with the CPC, or does it have to be an AMX mouse?
5. Does *Stop Press* work in full colour? I have an LC-200 printer and amthinking of getting it?
6. Which upgrade gives the most extra memory from 128k?
7. I am hoping to get a 3.5-inch second disk drive. Can all the software be copied from 3-inch to 3.5-inch, and if so, how?

Chris Miller
Devon

! ***1.*** *Sorry, no way: the two computers are completely different!*
2. *The RS232 interface lets your CPC send data to other computers with an RS232 port (such as the Amstrad Notepad reviewed last issue), and connect to modems, which allow you to access bulletin board services using the telephone.*
3. *Like most of the Amsoft books, this is virtually impossible to get hold of. However, a local library should have a book on CP/M, and as it's the same over different computers, it doesn't have to be CPC-specific.*
4. *You can also use a Genius mouse, available from Datel (0782 744324). The reason that other mice won't co-operate is that the CPC needs a special interface to work with them.*
5. *Unfortunately, neither Stop Press nor any other CPC desktop publishing program will produce colour pages.*
6. *A 256K silicon disk will expand your system to 384K. A normal 256K expansion will only give you 320K, because 64K of the extra memory overlaps with the existing second 64K.*
7. *PD, type-ins, and much utility software can be copied easily. Bear in mind that much of it won't run without an ABBA switch: try Avatar on 0442 251705. Most games, though, are protected: if you need a backup of these, the best bet is to contact specialists R&C, on 081 552 8900.*

Whoops!

I own a CPC 6128 and cannot get *GPaint* (*AA80* covertape) to print out... the program just ➢

review Label Design

£2.50 plus disk and SAE ● Not CPC 464 ● Alan Scully, PO Box 435, Glasgow G12 8SG

There's no shortage of word-processors on the CPC, but when it comes to printing a label, or even disks, you're faced with an uphill task. Does Label Design make it easy? David Wilson finds out...

Alan Scully, once a well-known figure in the world of CPC PD, has recently turned his attention to commercial software. After budget DTP package *Pagemaker Deluxe*, his latest project (written with help from Struan Bartlett) is a cheap utility for designing and printing disk labels. Aimed squarely at Goldmark Systems' £12 *LabelMaker*, it certainly wins out on price. But is the program itself any good?

One of the major selling points over Goldmark's program is that four, rather than two, label sizes are supposedly available: 3-inch, 3.5-inch, 5.25-inch and 'address labels'. In fact this is being slightly economical with the truth, because the 5.25-inch and address label sizes are exactly the same. However, support for 3-inch labels is well implemented: the tricky question of how to print each side the right way up has been solved by the inclusion of two options, "Mirror" and "Invert". (The program's author will supply labels for the price of £2.50 for one hundred 3" or 3.5" labels, or £1.40 for 100 address or 5.25" labels).

Options are selected by pressing a letter for each function. Although the manual is on disk and consequently needs to be printed out on your own printer, a "quick reference" sheet is supplied with the program, and a list of possible options is displayed on the screen at all times. In general, the program is pretty user-friendly, although some options could certainly be easier to use.

So, what can you put on your label? For a start, you can enter text in any standard 8x8 font (a large selection is provided), in either single or double height. However, this is quite a cumbersome process, as you cannot simply move your cursor to the right place on the label and type away: instead, you must select the "Text" option for every line you wish to type. Unfortunately, positioning is by coarse text co-ordinates rather than more detailed graphics co-ordinates.

Although you cannot draw your own pictures – not even simple lines – you can load in clip art, in either *Stop Press/PowerPage* or *Pagemaker Deluxe* format. This means that, to get the most out of the program, you need a DTP package that can save clip art in one of these formats: so although starting off with the program is easy, thanks to the pieces of clip art supplied with it, this is likely to become extremely tiresome in the long run when you want to use your own designs.

Alternatively, you could use an art package such as *Art Studio* or *GPaint*. This deprives you of the option to save frequently-used blocks for direct import into Label Design: however, it may prove a cheaper option for those who don't possess a DTP package. To facilitate this, labels are saved in 17K format, which does mean that they take up about twice as much disk space as they ought to!

It is possible to print labels in either draft or quality mode: the second option, while taking longer, provides a more impressive result. However, be warned that, due to the peculiar method employed by the program, some users will find that their printers do not support this mode. The instructions state that printers must be "fully Epson-compatible": well, until I used this, I thought that my Epson printer was...

The big question is whether you actually need this program. Although it's cheap, and provides the essentials needed to design and print disk labels, a PD desktop publishing program – such as the new *PowerPage 128* – will do just as much as *Label Design*, for an even lower price. In addition, features missing from *Label Design* (such as the ability to create your own art, more than two text sizes, and a zoom mode) will be available. You can also use a DTP package for other design applications, whereas *Label Design* is unsurprisingly restricted to the one task. As such, it's difficult to endorse wholeheartedly.

VERDICT

GOOD NEWS
- Cheap
- Quite user-friendly
- Basic design options present

BAD NEWS
- Text entry is cumbersome
- Difficult to use your own graphics
- Does nothing a DTP package can't

RATING 51%

➢ crashes. A colleague of mine has written to you previously with the same problem. What's this I read in November's issue of *AA*? "Just transfer the files HARDCOPY.BIN and HCOPY3.BIN to your original *GPaint* disk and the program will print." Sorry AA, I have followed your instructions to the letter, but still can't get *GPaint* to print out. Please help!

C.W. Beckett
Stockport

Erm, sorry about that. A slight mess-up on the technical front meant that the MENU.BIN program refuses to transfer the files properly: they always get corrupted. Don't worry, though, because help is at hand! Simply rewind the tape to just before the HARDCOPY.BIN and HCOPY3.BIN files are found, insert your GPaint disk, and type:

```
|TAPE: LOAD "HCOPY3.BIN",&AF00
|DISC: SAVE "HCOPY3.BIN",B,&AF00,&149
```

If you have a 464, or (if you have a 664, 6128 or Plus):

```
|TAPE: LOAD "HARDCOPY.BIN",&AF00
|DISC: SAVE "HARDCOPY.BIN",B,&AF00,&C0
```

It's a mirage

We bought our first CPC 6128 about a year ago (second-hand).

1. Among the many accessories was a "Mirage Imager"? What is its purpose? Is it an advantage to have it attached to the computer?

2. How can two joysticks be used in a game?

3. Some of the programs could only be cleared by switching off at the mains. Is there a universal method of clearing a program without resorting to mains switch-off?

4. Is there any likelihood of *AA* testing the "Mega Drive" as advertised by GVL Microform?

J. Coghlan
Norfolk

1. *The "Mirage Imager" is an old tape-to-disk backup device, rather like the Multiface, but not nearly as good: it will only copy a very few programs, and those that it does usually take up too much disk space. Junk it.*

2. *You need a "joystick splitter". Try O.J. Software on 0257 421915.*

3. *You don't need to switch off at the mains: try flicking the ON-OFF switch on your 6128 off and on again. For many games which disable the CTRL-SHIFT-ESC key combination, this is the only possible method.*

Beginners' Questions

What if you're a complete beginner with a really simple query? Our beginners' buddy Alex van Damm is here to help you. Write to Ask Alex, Amstrad Action, Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW

Game over!

Mr Parker from Sheffield would like some assistance with his favourite games.

"Recently I purchased a Multiface 2 for my 464 Plus. I have no problems when I am using it to POKE in infinite lives etc., but the problem is that I have a lot of games which I have no cheats for, which I would like to find out. I am unsure of how to use the Multiface to its full."

I wish I could tell you how to do this in a few words! The POKEs printed in Cheat Mode, though, are found by experienced hackers who understand machine code. A POKE changes the machine code game in some way so that, for example, it never takes a life from your total. As such, there's no easy way for us mere mortals to do it!

A lot of games have been hacked, though: you might just not have seen the POKEs. One hacker who might be able to help you is Lee Rouane, who's just started his own games fanzine (Alive and Kicking). You could always ask for help on the games you're stuck on – and order a copy of his fanzine at the same time! Write to Lee (with an SAE) at 3 Causeway House, Kelstedge, Ashover, Chesterfield S45 ODW.

Not so BASIC!

Amanda Rowe from Milton Keynes is having problems with BASIC.

"Help! Normally I am a games player by rule, but now I want to start writing my own programs: the only trouble is, no matter how often I read my manual or Ian Sinclair's 'Amstrad Computing', my brain dies: I just cannot seem to hold the information that I have read and tried to understand.

"I can understand some BASIC principles, but when it comes to strings, variables and all the rest of it, I get a serious case of brain drain. I know that they say you're never too old to learn, but now I'm beginning to wonder. It only depresses me when I cannot get any further, then I lose heart and do not want to continue. Please, if you can, help this idiot before she goes mad and throws her terminal out of the nearest window!"

"Idiot", Amanda? Of course you're not! Only a few people find BASIC easily to learn (I certainly wasn't one of them) and it's easy to get thrown by the complexity of it all: besides, the manual isn't the best book to help you learn how to program. As I've been through it before, I hope I can help you a little with your problems.

Think of a variable as a labelled box which you can put a number in. For example, if I wanted to store the AA staff's ages, I could have a box labelled "alex", and put the number 18 in it. To do this in BASIC, I'd type "alex=18". Similarly, I could write "rod=403" or "adam=2". Then, when I wanted to see how old everyone was, I only need to type "PRINT alex, rod, adam". And, if it was my birthday, to move on a year I would type "alex=alex+1".

A string is a special sort of variable. Instead of holding a number, this box can hold a sentence, a word, or an abbreviation: in fact, up to 255 letters. The only thing to note is that the name of the string needs to end with $, the dollar sign (don't ask me why). If I wanted to store a string describing AA (let's call it "aa$"), I'd type:

```
aa$="fab"
```

If I needed reminding what AA is like, then, I only have to type PRINT aa$.

Finally, Amanda, try not to aim too high to begin with! It takes years of programming experience to be able to write programs like "Wild West Seymour" or "Art Studio". Instead, start with small programs which, say, add a few numbers together and PRINT the result. After a while, I'm sure you'll find things getting easier... and if you need any further help, please write to me and ask: it's what I'm here for!

4. Most 3.5-inch disk drives are basically the same mechanism. The main difference lies in accessories and operating systems... watch out for the definitive test, coming to AA soon!

Pro-blem

I am a 464 owner with tape only. I am considering buying Protext, but I am unsure as to which of the two versions (AMSDOS or CP/M) will work on my computer. The CP/M version is a lot more expensive. Why?

Paul Wills
Towcester

The CP/M version is the best one because it includes all the various Protext utilities like the spellchecker, disk copier and more. However, if you've got a 464 you can't use the CP/M version! Unfortunately, CP/M is a disk-only system. The AMSDOS version is effectively the same program, though, minus the bells and whistles. It's available on tape from O.J. Software (0257 421915). Alternatively, if you buy yourself a ROM-board, you would be able to use the ROM version (available from most mail-order stockists) which is available as soon as you switch on your CPC. Most serious users wouldn't be without it!

Mind your language

Some programming languages just invite puns. How many computer journalists can admit to never having written an article on C called "C for Yourself" or something equally dreadful? You can't believe how difficult it was to resist the temptation to head this article "Go Forth and Multiply"... ahem, maybe I'd better just get on with the article (good idea – Ed)

No.4: Forth

Anyway, to the language itself. Forth is a strange language. It's based on a system known as "Reverse Polish Notation", so-called because the name of the Polish mathematician who invented it is virtually unpronounceable. It's also what's known as a "stack-based" language. (New Year's Resolution: I must stop using so much computer jargon...)

Imagine a pile of sheets of paper, each with a number written on. You can put a number on this pile, but only by dropping it on the top. Similarly, you can take a number from it, but you're only allowed to take the top one. This imaginary pile of paper is known as the "stack", and it's the basis of all Forth operations.

So, for example, say that you wanted to add 2 and 3, and print the result. In BASIC, this would be a simple matter of "PRINT 2+3". In Forth, the first thing you have to do is put the two numbers on the top of the stack. Then you enter "+", which means "take the top two numbers from the stack, add them together, and put this number on the stack". Easy enough - except for the fact that we haven't printed the number yet. Enter a full stop ("take the top number from the stack and print it"), and we're finished.

The instruction, then, looks something like "2 3 + ." . The method of entering "2 3 +", rather than "2 + 3", is what's meant by the term "Reverse Polish Notation". As most people would write down "2+3", Forth has remained a rather marginal and under-used language – although it was used as the built-in language on ZX81 lookalike machine the Jupiter Ace. However, this paucity is not reflected by the number of versions available for the CPC.

Most of these are PD versions running under CP/M, and there are millions (well, quite a lot) of the things! One of the best is FORTH16K, a CP/M 2.2 version customised by WACCI bigwigs Clive Bellaby and Alan Tilling to support many of the CPC's graphics features. To try out this unjustly neglected language, why not check out WACCI or another PD library and see what they can offer you...

PD Postbag

Print enhancing

I've written to ask a few questions concerning *Print Enhancer*, featured in the November 1992 issue:

1. Is is available of tape or disk?
2. If it's available on tape, does it still require 128K?
3. Also, is it true that it's 75p?

Alexander Griffiths
Dorset

1. Erm... Due to the nature of the program (lots of loadable fonts, as well as each section being a seperate program), disk would be the most sensible.
2. No.
3. YES! Isn't it marvellous?

Wanted: Paul Dwerryhouse (preferably alive)

I was reading through *Amstrad Action* to see your address in the Public Domain section. I would be grateful if you could give me any information of where I can get a program called I-Spell written by Paul Dwerryhouse. I have got a 464.

P.S. Bhamber
West Midlands

I-Spell was originally available from WACCI but is now circulating around many other libraries including Domain PD, Robot PD, Presto PD and Yorkie PD. The program does, however, require 128K to run due to the immense size of the dictionary. Oh, and grab a disk drive for the Bankman program as well.

PD CHARTS

Thanks to Thomas Faull of Sounds Like PD for sending me a lovely letter informing me of his library and his all-important software chart. Sounds Like PD used to deal only in music-related PD, but has now branched out to supply games and utilities as well. Write to Mr. Faull at: Dromore House, 6 Keyberry Park, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 1BZ.

1 **The Digitised Collection I**
2 **The Digitised Collection II**
3 **Sound Collection II**
4 **Sound Collection III**
5 **Basic Graphic Demos II**
6 **Rocky Horror Slideshow**
7 **Sound Collection**
8 **Paradise Demo (Side one)**
9 **Paradise Demo (Side two)**
10 **Games II**

PD Public Image

Welcome to the public domain, where you CAN get something for nothing! TIM BLACKBOND brings us our monthly round-up of PD news...

DEMO

Paradise Demo

Paradox • Imported by Robot PD

The *Paradise Demo* is a double-sided multi-parter that boasts some stunning graphics and music. It consists of a total of seven parts, each of which are selected by a mini-game menu, not entirely unlike *The Demo* and *The Terrific Demo*. This 'game' involves a knight running along a landscape, with each part depicted as a bottle of potion. Stooping down to collect this will promptly whisk you away to the associated section.

The knight moves a little slowly and you can only move in one direction (in other words forward), so despite the flashiness of it, there is little variety involved.

Each part comes with excellent music (which sounds a lot better if you connect your CPC to an adjacent hi-fi) and equally good graphics. I'm not sure about full CPC compatibility as I couldn't get part three (*Razzter*) to load. *The Demo* it may not be but *Paradise Demo* certainly is impressive.

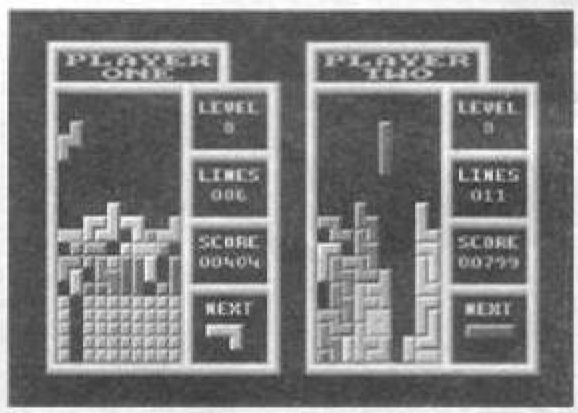
78%

GAME

Power Tetris

By A. Stroiczek • Imported by Robot PD

There have countless *Tetris* clones appearing in the public domain, most of which have played and looked better than the original CPC version from Mirrorsoft (which, and let's face it, isn't very difficult). *Power Tetris* is the Rolls Royce of them all. With a name that suggests it is written by Richard Fairhurst, it not only



Power Tetris in its superb two-player mode. It really is frighteningly addictive stuff

LOOSE TALK

Presto moves again!

Fed up with the town of Neath due to it being dull, Matt Gullam has now moved to the amusingly-named Cockett in Swansea. The new address is: 58 Graiglwyd Road, Cockett, Swansea SA2 OXA.

Even more PowerPage news...

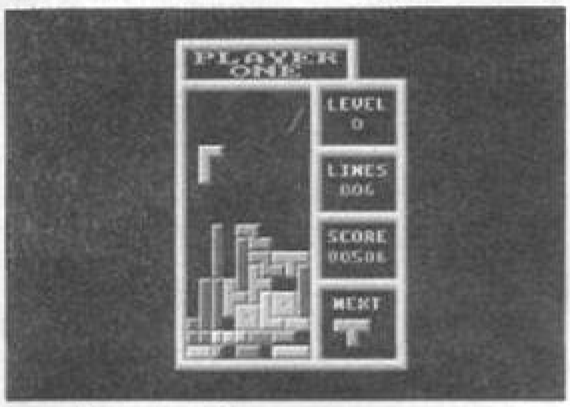
Mr Fairhurst is constantly adding bits to PowerPage 128, yet is still nowhere near completing it. He'll be happy only when it washes the dishes as well as printing pages. The new version includes:

- 25% size page preview option
- Copy block
- Show all current settings
- Two (Yes, TWO) extra lines, making 72!

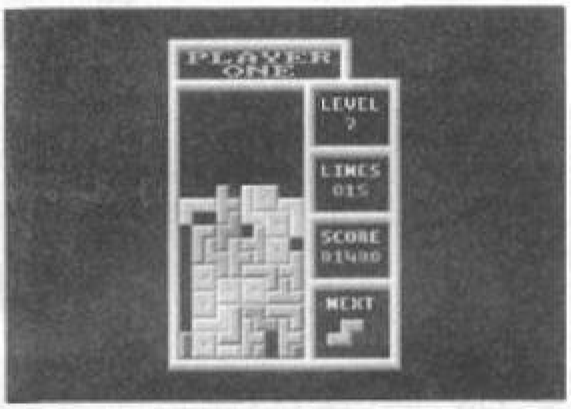
Need we say more? Stop Press is utter, utter trash...

Burn those utilities!

Yeah! Go on. Just throw those disks on the fire. I mean, disk copiers, DTP packages, spreadsheets, databases and word processors – They're all so... so... BO-O-O-O-O-ORING. Wouldn't you rather play Power Tetris? At least that's what Simon Walker of PD Fun thinks. He runs a library where serious programs have sand kicked in their faces. Games, demos, adventures, music... everything EXCEPT utilities. Apparently, Simon uses Croco Magneto to copy the disks (Oh, you're so sarky! – ed). Write to him at: 41 Mitchelgate, Kirby, Lonsdale, Lancs LA6 2BE.



Even in its one-player mode, Power Tetris is still the best CPC Tetris variant we've seen.



There's even an option for green-screen players. Pit we can't show you...

Fanzine review: Alive and Kicking

24 A5 pages • Editor: Lee Rouane • 3 Causeway House, Kelstedge, Ashover, Chesterfield S45 ODW

After the tragic death of Carl Surry's Playmates, the CPC owners only interested in games were tossed aside. Now, Lee Rouane comes to the rescue with the first magazine to be influenced by the rock-pop band, Simple Minds.

Games, games, games. That's what *Alive and Kicking* specialises in. "But with so few new games being released, how can Lee expect to fill 24 pages?". You might well ask. Lee would just point out the additional features for users of the Bonzo tape-to-disk utility, the games cheat pages (containing both listings and keypress pokes), the 'Hackers Haunt' and not to mention the general CPC news section.

Also, why should a games fanzine review ONLY the brand new games? There isn't one CPC user that has every single game that has ever seen the light of day on the CPC. Issue One contains reviews of *Hero Quest*, *Titus The Fox*, *Switchblade*, *Turbo The Tortoise* and more. What's more, these game reviews are very well written indeed.

Every fanzine editor looks back on the first issue and cringes. Lee has no cause for concern as far as the writing style goes, but presentation could be improved. The body text is done with an all capitals font found with Art Studio (SQUASHED.FNT) and the headline style varies from page to page. Also, the game rating system by no means remains the same. Some have percentages, some just comments and others have both. However, nobody can get the hang of PowerPage the first time. A worthy read, take it from me.

75%

gives the best in-game music, graphics and playability but also a two-player mode option. That's not all, the programmer has gone one better than that, with a special lead, two CPC's can be connected together, giving four players at any one time.

The one-player mode is just like normal *Tetris*, whereas the competitive edge is thrown in. Every time a player gets more than one row, the same amount is added to the other player(s) stacks. Instead of the usual, who gets the most rows, it is replaced by a frantic race to stay at the bottom of the screen. Even though it is fun, there are times when your opponent will lose just as you are getting warmed up, forcing a premature game ending.

Power Tetris is easily the best *Tetris* version yet, especially fun if you know someone close to you who you can link your CPC to. As soon as the *AA* team got their hands on it, they were hooked. Friendships forged over the years where shattered, deadlines were missed, furniture was thrown... the two-player mode takes one of the classics of gameplay and makes it better still.

89%

GAME

Frogger

Anon • Available from G.D. PD (Games 11)

Frogger is a remake of the oldie game of the same name (poetry!) based on getting a family of frogs across a busy road, a flowing river and safely to their own lilly pads. This version stands up very well, the traffic on the road and the logs on the river all move without slowing the game down. Younger players please note, it is incredibly hard to get even one frog home. This high difficulty mars the enjoyment just a little.

67%

Rogues gallery

This month, we speak to the man who can't stay in the same town for more than two months. Live and direct from Cockett [snigger from the spotty kids at the back] – Matt Gullam, of Presto fame...



Matt Gullam

Full name (including embarrassing middle names)
Matthew James Rameses Niblick III Kerplunk, Kerplunk Whoops! Where's My Thribble? Gullam.

Age and specialist subject
Erm, 19 and I'm a Teacher In Training (often just known by its abbreviation).

Any silly nicknames?
All the ones associated with having ginger hair, such as Duracell, Ginge, Coppertop, etc.

What are your top five PD programs?
Hmmm, that's a difficult one. I suppose if they don't HAVE to be in order of likeness it'll have to be Overscan Slideshow, Anti-Multiface, PowerPage 128 and a Presto exclusive game called Plumpy.

What is your favourite music?
It's still Rush. Can't see myself going off them.

...and your least favourite?
I loath rave music. How people can listen to and even compose such mindless drivel is beyond me.

What is your favourite film and actor/actress?
I'm not really picky in the actor department, but I do like the director of *Twin Peaks*, David Lynch. Oh yes, I like *Twin Peaks* itself as well.

What are the best and worst bits about running a PD library?
The best bits are getting nice, long chatty (full-of-praise) letters instead of the usual boring "Send me this, this and that, thanks, goodbye" type. The worst has got to be getting so bogged down by orders that I have to ignore swapping contacts. Can I apologise to Knutschfleck for that offence?

....and the highlights of running a fanzine?
I like getting an issue out on time (*Ahem! – Tim*) and I hate having to apologise for an issue being late. I'll bet you hate having to bring out constantly late issues, Tim (*Double ahem! – Tim*).

What is your most embarrassing incident?
When a girl I live next door to (Leanne) asked me to teach her how to play pool and turned out to be NEARLY as good as me!

Finally, what is the most exciting thing about living in Cockett?
Well, I'm just a stone's throw away from Dylan Thomas's favourite pub, The Uplands Tavern. The International centre of friendly service and quality beer. That had better get me a free pint.

And finally...

Have YOU got some news for *Amstrad Action's* public domain section? Or maybe you're starting your own library or have a program you want to show off? Write to:

PUBLIC IMAGE, Amstrad Action, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW

Plug-in!

Of all the 8-bit micros on the market, the CPC boasts most flexibility. The number of gadgets and accessories on the market is amazing, as ROD LAWTON explains...

What makes the CPC the best 8-bit computer you can buy? Is it that it's a great games machine? Is it because it's the best machine for serious jobs like word processing, accounting and desktop publishing? Maybe it's because it has BASIC built in? All those things are true, but there is one more factor – it's also the most 'expandable' home computer ever made.

Amstrad themselves made loads of plug in accessories to make your CPC do more. There was the DD-1 disk drive and interface that turned a CPC464 into a disk machine. Or the FD-1 drive, that gave 6128 owners a second drive. And there were TV modulators that let you plug your machine into a TV rather than its own monitor... and even TV tuners, which turned your monitor into a TV!

Apart from these goodies, lots of third-party manufacturers made devices to expand and develop the potential of the Amstrad CPC.

Sadly, with the general decline in the Amstrad market, many of these plug-in gadgets are no longer made. Amstrad ceased production of its own peripherals some time ago.

However, all is not lost! Many mail order specialists scour the trade for stocks of these items, and much Amstrad equipment is still available. In addition, where items have been impossible to find, other suppliers are making their own replacements.

So if you know where to look, it's still possible to buy just about every conceivable plug-in gadget for your CPC. And as far as knowing where to look is concerned, this is it! On these pages you will find a list of CPC peripherals still available, what they do, what they cost and where to get them.

Buying by mail

While most of us would rather nip down to the High Street to buy our kit, sadly the High Street stockists have abandoned the trusty CPC. So we must rely on various mail order suppliers for our hardware.

Since many items are available in only limited quantities, we'd recommend phoning any supplier before ordering to confirm that the goods are available and in stock (adverts appearing in AA have to be prepared weeks in advance – a lot can happen in a few weeks). While you're on the phone, confirm too the current price and the charge for postage and packing.

Buying second-hand

Amstrad Action has over 35,000 readers, so you can bet that at least one of them has just the gadget you're looking for – and is prepared to sell it to you. So if you're on the looking for a particular peripheral, why not scan the Small Ads page every month. There are always loads of people out there selling kit.

But wait, here's a better idea. Why not send in a 'Wanted' ad? Small ads are now FREE in *Amstrad Action*, so it'll cost you no more than the price of a stamp! What would you do without us?

Plus owners beware!

The vast majority of CPC peripherals were designed for the 'old' style CPC machines as opposed to the newer Plus models. This means they are equipped with connections that attach to the CPC's edge connector at the back of the machine. On the Plus, though, this rather unsatisfactory arrangement has been replaced by a proper D-type connector. Unfortunately, old-style peripherals won't connect to it!

That's not to say they won't work, though. Quite often, all you need is an adaptor... enter the WAVE 'Widget' (£10), an adaptor that plugs into your Plus's D-connector and ends in the old-style edge connector. You can contact WAVE on 0229 870000.

Hopefully, the solution will be as simple as that. However, there are a number of internal differences between the CPC and the Plus which mean that some CPC peripherals won't work on the newer machines. Your best bet is to check with the supplier in each case.

Manuals

We get more requests for manuals than just about anything else! Fortunately, WAVE has stocks of just about all of them (except the Amstrad Firmware manual), including CPC6128 manuals, 464/6128 Plus manuals and Service Manuals for most models.

☎ WAVE • 0229 870000

Repairs

Various companies will repair CPCs (not that they break deown very often). Try these people for starters:

☎ WTS Electronics • 0582 491949

Accessories

There have been hundreds of plug-in widgets for the Amstrad range. Some useful, some not so useful... One accessory we haven't included is 'mice'. There are two models available – the Genius Mouse and the AMX Mouse, but both only work with specific programs. We reckon they're of limited use to the average owner.

Multiface 2 (£35-42)

The Multiface is the hackers delight and the gamer's salvation. This little black box plugs into your CPC's expansion port. It works by 'freezing' the contents of the machine's memory at any one moment. You can then examine the code, even dump it to disk.

It's very handy for backing up tape games, for example, on to disk. And also for typing in cheat codes as printed in the *Cheat Mode* section.You'd better hurry, though, since the manufacturers (Romantic Robot) are ceasing production.

☎ Romantic Robot • 081 200 8870
WAVE • 0229 870000

Dust covers (£8-9)

Worried about your beloved CPC getting crumbs, fag ash, dust and heaven knows what else into all its delicate little nooks and crannies? A dust cover could be the answer, even if all your macho mates laugh at you...

☎ MJC Supplies • 0462 481166

Joystick splitter (£9)

Many CPC games offer simultaneous two-player modes, which is great fun. Except that one player usually has to make do with the keyboard while the other keeps the joystick. A 'joystick' splitter is the answer! Now you can both waggle away to your hearts' content.

☎ O.J. Software • 0257 421915

Clock/Radio CT-1 (£7-15)

This is a bit of an old relic, frankly, but at the prices currently being asked it's still a bit of a bargain. The CT-1 is a clock radio built to slip neatly beneath your monitor.

Why should you want one? Well, there's the clock display for a start, to save you checking your watch all the time, and the alarm could be useful if you're in the habit of falling asleep at your desk...

☎ WAVE • 0229 870000
Trade-In-Post • 0952 462135
GVL Microform • 0772 701248

Disks and drives


A disk drive is usually the first peripheral a CPC owner buys. But which drive...?

Both the 464 and the 6128 will accept external disk drives. However, the 464 does not have the necessary internal hardware to work one, so it needs a special interface – the whole package is an 'A-drive'. These are now getting hard to find. The 464 Plus is a different kettle of fish. It does have a disk drive controller built in. Look out for a hardware project in AA soon that tells you how to convert this machine to work with a disk drive.

6128 owners already have a disk drive, of course. The advantage of having a second ('B-drive') is that many programs become easier and faster to use. And you can also invest in a 3.5-inch drive, which will (with the appropriate software) allow you to store 800K of data on a single disk.

Look out for a special feature next month on 3.5-inch disk drives and operating systems!

A-drives (£160)

If you buy a disk drive for a 464 (assuming it doesn't already have one plugged in), it has to be an 'A-drive' (as explained above). There is currently only one supplier of A-drives for the Amstrad.

☎ Siren Software • 061 724 7572

B-drives: 3.5-inch (£80)

Well now, B-drives. There are loads to choose from here. Basically, they're all 3.5-inch units (hence cheap disks) capable of storing upwards of 800K on a single disk. The only difference is the formatting software that comes with them. (See next month's disk drive feature for the definitive run-down.)

B-drives are useless, though, if you have a basic 464. They're only useful to 6128 owners or 464 owners who already have an Amstrad DD-1 disk drive attached.

☎ GVL Microform • 0772 701248
Trade-In-Post • 0952 462135
SD Microsystems • 0353 862678
Avatar • 0442 251705

B-drives: 3-inch (£80)

If you get a B-drive you might as well go for a 3.5-inch version. Just in case you hanker after a 3-inch job, though (maybe all your software is on 3-inch disk), they are still available.

☎ Avatar • 0442 251705

Drive Switchers

Now you've probably got the idea by now that this disk drive business is quite complicated. Well, if you're still with us, here's some more stuff to think about.

ABBA Switch (£13)

If you have two drives connected to your machine, one will be the A-drive, one will be the B-drive. This switch lets you swap them round at will.

3rd drive switch

Two disk drives seems extravagant, but it is possible to have three! This little widget is what you need (oh, and the third drive, of course).

☎ Avatar • 0442 251705

3-inch Disks (£1.50-£2)

The great thing about 3.5-inch drives, of course, is that you have no trouble getting hold of disks – they're cheap, too. But most of us are stuck with the 3-inch jobbies. Getting hold of 3-inch disks is starting to be a problem for High Street shoppers. Luckily, lots of mail order suppliers have them.

☎ GVL Microform • 0772 701248
MJC Supplies • 0462 481166

Modulators & Tuners

The CPC/Plus machines have always been sold as complete systems. That is to say, you get the keyboard, computer and monitor as a set. That's the good news. The bad news is that the computer will only work with this monitor.

Normally, that's no problem, but what happens if you want to swap from a mono display to colour? Wouldn't it be great if you could simply plug your CPC into a telly? The problem is that the CPC has what's known as RGB output, while TVs require an RF signal input. The solution? The Amstrad MP modulator/tuner series...

MP1F (£23-26)

Amstrad had to make two different modulator models because the 464 and the 6128 have two different power requirements. The MP-1 is the model you need for the 464.

Now while these are still available, they are European models. This means they only have a SCART output, and only comparatively few TVs accept a SCART input. Be warned, then, before you rush out and buy one.

☎ WAVE • 0229 870000
O.J. Software • 0257 421915

MP2F (£30-33)

This is the modulator designed for the 6128. The same problems apply regarding availability as for the 464 version. Again, only European SCART versions are available currently.

☎ O.J. Software • 0257 421915
WAVE • 0229 870000

Videomaster (£36-46)

This is a brand new product (reviewed this month, incidentally, on page 30) which does pretty well what the MP-1/2 does, only with rather more flexibility. It produces a composite video output and versions are available with either SCART, BNU or phono connections. Basically, the VideoMaster is designed to connect to a VCR rather than a TV but it does, of course, connect to a TV indirectly as a result. You can't get a version of the VideoMaster with an RF output, but then you can't get an old-style RF-output modulator anyway!

☎ Campursoft • 041 554 4735

MP-3 Tuners

Right, so you can connect your CPC to a TV. But what if it's a colour TV you're missing, not a colour monitor? You can save the cost of a colour portable by converting your colour monitor into a TV with the MP3 TV tuner. This handy gadget seems easier to get hold of than the modulators, and is available from a number of different suppliers (see below).

☎ MP3 TV Tuner (£23-30)
GVL Microform • 0772 701248
WAVE • 0229 870000
O.J. Software • 0257 421915

Upgrades

The CPC is one of the most 'expandable' machines on the market. And here are all the bits and pieces you need to expand it...

6128 ROM (£25)

Lots of 464 owners have regretted not paying out the extra for a 6128 machine. However, it is possible to upgrade a 464 to 6128 spec. This is a three-stage process involving the purchase of a 64K RAM pack (to get 128K in total), a DD-1 plug in disk drive and a new internal ROM. This final bit is necessary because the 6128 has some additional features. You can only get full compatibility if you instal the 6128 ROM in your 464.

GVL Microform • 0772 701248
Avatar • 0442 251705

64K RAM pack (£40-50)

You can increase a 464's RAM to 128K simply by plugging in a DK'tronics 64K RAM pack. These are no longer made, but they're still available from lots of different suppliers. The upgrade is useful if your 464 already has a plug-in drive and you want to run 128K programs. Many serious programs as well as some games are 128K only.

GVL Microform • 0772 701248
Datel • 0782 744324
MJC Supplies • 0462 481166
WAVE • 0229 870000
O.J. Software • 0257 421915

464 Plus upgrade (£15)

It's also possible to upgrade the newer 464 Plus to 128K – and it's much simpler too! All you need is a couple of chips and... well, Avatar will do it for you. (Dedicated tinkerers should look out for a hardware project coming soon which tells you how to do it yourself for very little money...)

Avatar • 0442 251705

464 Plus disk interface upgrade (£30)

The 464 Plus is very similar internally to the 6128 Plus. Much more similar, in fact, than the old CPC464 was to the CPC6128.

As a result, fitting a disk interface to the 464 Plus is not really difficult at all. Indeed, Avatar will do it for you.

Avatar • 0442 251705

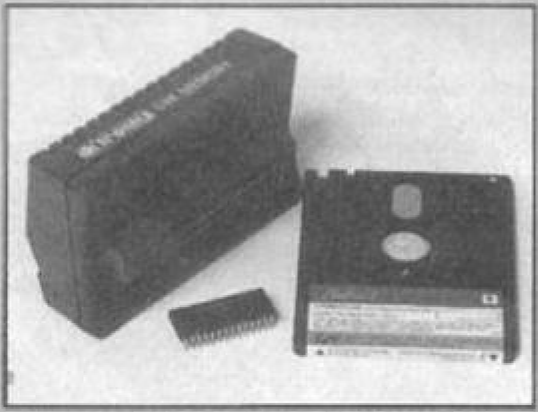
CPC 6128 Plus tape modification (£5-33)

The big disadvantage of the 6128 Plus over the old CPC6128 is that the newer machine doesn't have the facility to load tape software. Which is a real nuisance. However, WAVE will convert your 6128 Plus to load from tape (and save on to tape too).

Alternatively, reader Chris Johnson has worked out how to do the conversion, and is offering instructions and a diagram for £5...

Please note that, in both cases, the REM feature does not work. So multiload games and transferring the AA covertape to disk will be a problem for the inexperienced. (You have to listen for the gaps between files and then stop the tape while the CPC transfers the file to disk. Not impossible, but tricky to say the least.)

C. Johnson, 55 Carisbrook Close, Langney, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN23 8EQ
WAVE • 0229 870000



A lot of software needs 128K to run...

Leads

There are lots of useful little leads you can get for the CPC, some more useful than others – here are the best.

CPC6128 cassette leads (Not Plus!) (£4)

Owners of 6128 machines don't have a built-in cassette deck. But they can still load tape software, using the built in cassette port on the side of the computer. To do this, though, you need a lead to connect your tape player to the computer. Make sure you get one with a REM connection, as this will enable the computer to turn the tape motor on and off as required – essential when loading some programs, for example multiload games.

N.B. 6128 Plus owners should note that their machines do NOT have a built-in cassette port. Which is a real pain in the neck, because you can't use the Amstrad Action covertapes (you have to order the disk versions from Ablex instead). However, you can have your machine modified to load from tape (see the Upgrades section below)...

In the meantime, here's where to get your cassette leads.

O.J. Software • 0257 421915

Printer lead (£8-11)

The Amstrad needs a special printer lead with 'pin 14 disabled'. If your local computer shop doesn't know what you're talking about, shop somewhere else. The mail order suppliers below know the Amstrad inside out, so you should have no problems getting the right lead from them.

Incidentally, the newer Plus machines have a proper 'Centronics' connector at the back, as opposed to the CPC's simpler 'edge-connector'. Centronics leads are available all over the place, but you still have to make sure that pin 14 is disabled. You're still better off approaching a specialist.

GVL Microform • 0772 701248
MJC Supplies • 0462 481166
WAVE • 0229 870000
O.J. Software • 0257 421915

Keyboard-monitor extension leads (£8-9)

The CPC/Plus machines are pretty neatly designed systems. The only problem is that the keyboard unit has to be sited immediately in front of the monitor – the connecting leads aren't long enough to allow any other arrangement. The solution? A set of lead extensions, available from the following suppliers!

MJC Supplies • 0462 481166
O.J. Software • 0257 421915

ROMs



ROM software is fast and efficient.

Computer software is available in several different formats. 464s use tape-based software, 6128s use software on disk... but some programs are also available on ROM chips...

Rombo ROMboard (£25)

This is the 'industry-standard' ROM board. It can accept several different ROM chips simultaneously.

Avatar • 0442 251705

EPROMs (£3-3.50)

If you want to program your own EPROMs, you're going to need blank chips. Considering what they are, these are amazingly cheap.

Avatar • 0442 251705

EPROM programmer (£30)

It's possible to write your own ROM software, and not just buy it from software publishers. To do this, though, you need a special device called an EPROM programmer. (You can take EPROMs and ROMs to be the same thing in this context.)

Avatar • 0442 251705

RAMROM (£15)

Writing ROM software need not be any harder than writing ordinary programs, but you are going to want to test them before you 'blow' your EPROM. The RAMROM accurately 'simulates' a ROM chip with part of the Amstrad's own RAM.

Avatar • 0442 251705

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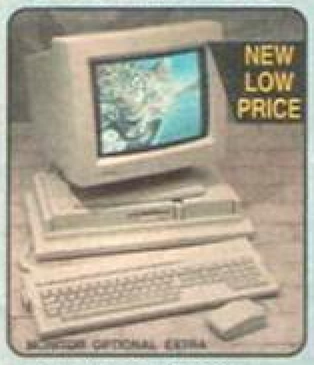
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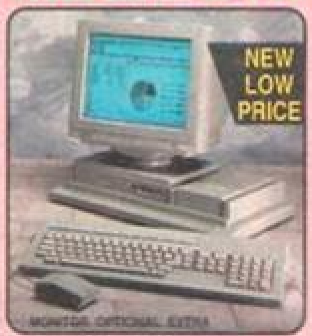
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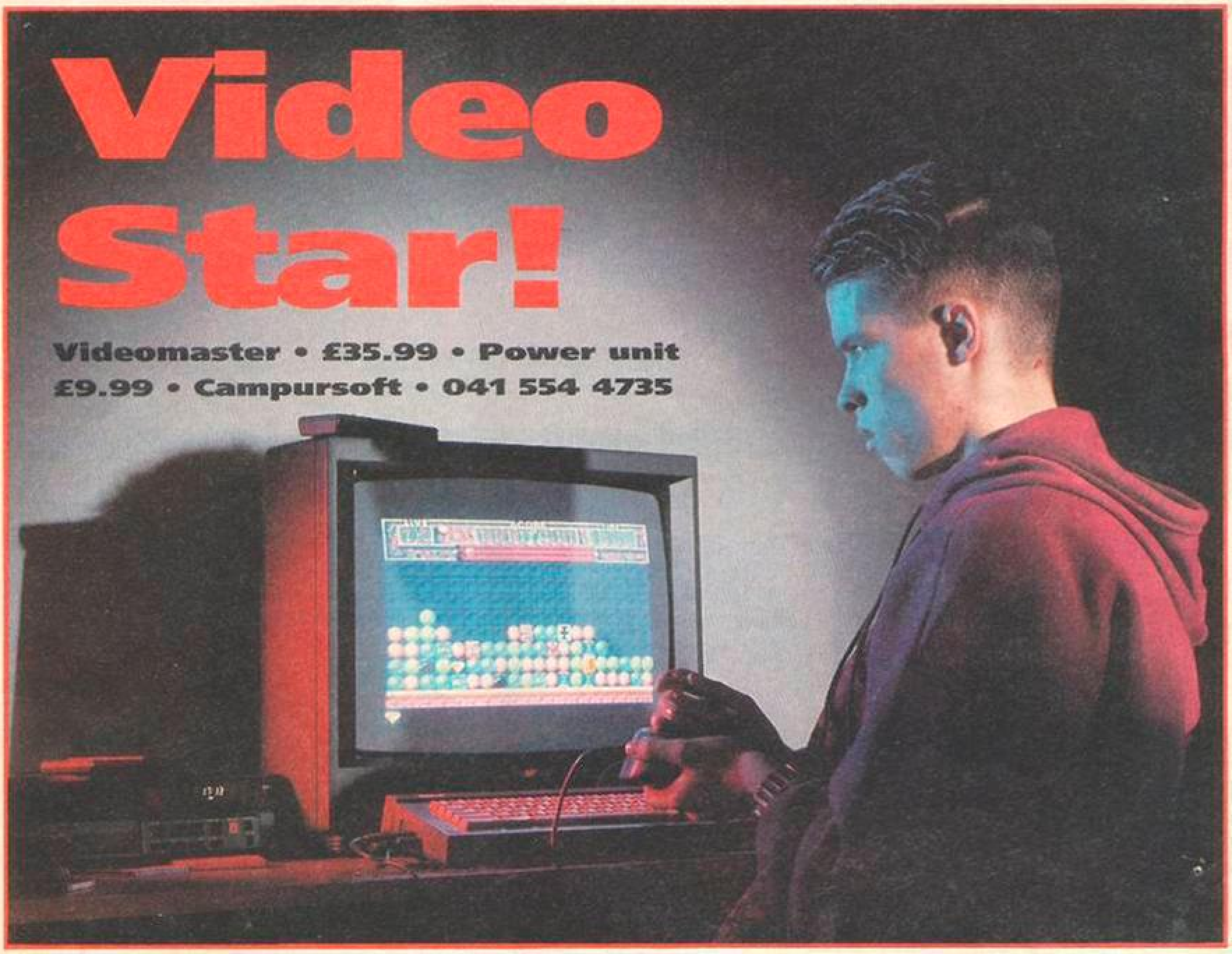
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Is Campursoft's Videomaster a cheap colour upgrade? Is it a video titling system? Is it a replacement for the Amstrad MP2? It's all this and more, as ROD Lawton discovers...

Why do some computers plug straight into a TV set while others need a purpose-made monitor? If the Amstrad CPC worked directly with a TV set (and was sold on its own, not with a monitor) it would be a darned sight cheaper, for a start.

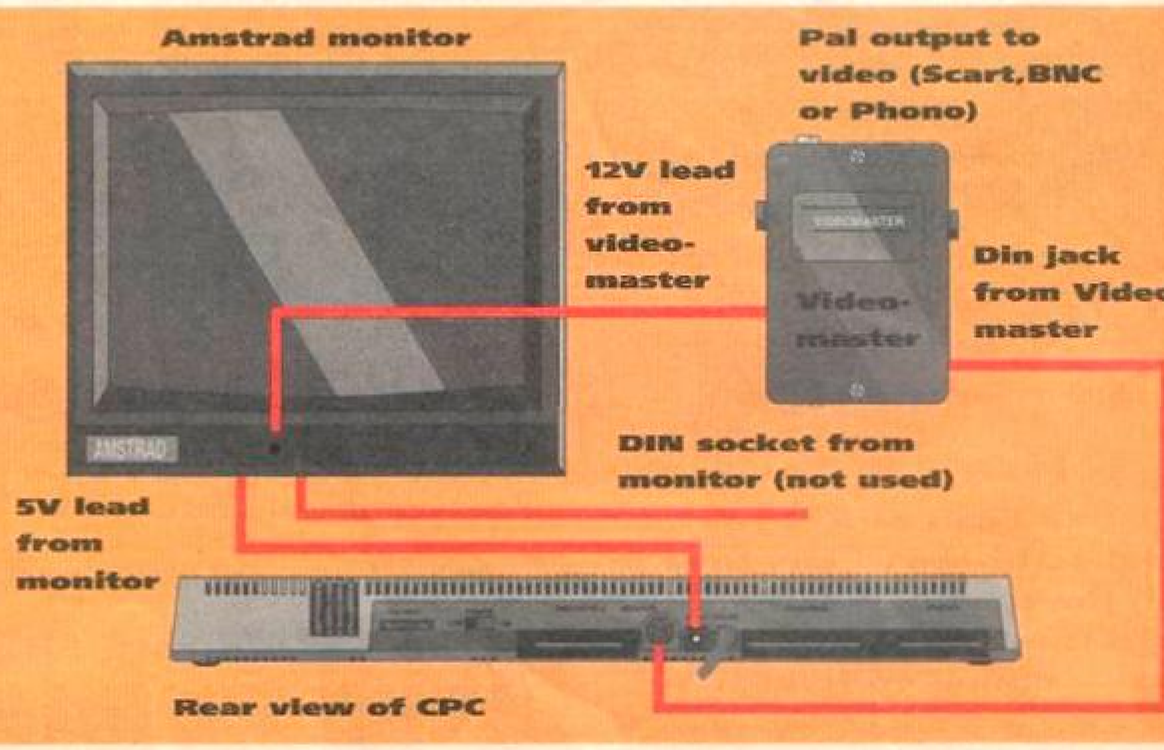
And yet it's not all a ploy on Amstrad's part to squeeze more money out of the users. Although many machines will plug straight into TVs, this method does have its disadvantages.

Televisions display images and sound broadcast as radio frequencies. (Some accept SCART and other inputs, but most sets only have this radio frequency – "RF" – input. In other words, the aerial socket!) This system works fine for moving images, but lacks resolution – essential for applications like word processing.

Which is why the CPC, in common with most other serious computers, has an RGB output. This gives a much sharper, cleaner and more stable image. But then you do have to have an RGB monitor, of course.

Setting up

What's the Videomaster like to set up? Initially, the mass of wires, plugs and sockets is a bit daunting, but the device comes with very clear instructions and diagrams, and provided you're methodical you'll have it up and running in minutes. It is a bit difficult covering your tracks afterwards – there are wires everywhere. You can tie them together and, if your set-up is semi-permanent, finish off with cable clamps.



The Amstrad 'package'

The CPC has always been sold as both a serious and a games machine. Given its serious uses, it makes sense to equip it with RGB output. RF output *as well* would have been nice, but it would have meant extra expense.

And since Amstrad has always aimed strongly at first-time buyers and computer novices, it made sense to sell the CPC as a complete package – i.e. with a monitor included. It bumped up the price, and made the system a bit inflexible, but it did offer users a 'complete solution'.

Do we have the power?

Unfortunately, not everything in the garden's rosy. Amstrad had got it right so far, but then they did some rather silly things:

1 They built the power supply into the monitor. Why? Well if you wanted to be cynical, you could observe that this meant you had to use an Amstrad monitor with your CPC, come what may

2 They wouldn't let you buy a monitor on its own. So if you bought a mono system and then decided later that you wanted to upgrade to colour... well, you couldn't, basically.

3 When they introduced the 6128, some time after the 464, they realised the power supply would have to be that much beefier to work the disk drive. Which meant that the colour monitors for the 464 and 6128 are not interchangeable. What a nightmare!

The upshot is that CPCs really are complete systems, true. The down-side is that you're well and truly stuck with the monitor that came with your system. Or are you?

Amstrad did relent a bit. After all, there were a lot of mono system owners out there who wanted to play games in colour. So they produced a device called a 'modulator' (it produced a 'modulated', or RF, version of the CPC's output as used by TVs). Actually, they produced two modulators; one for the 464 (the MP1) and one for the 6128 (the MP2). These modulators replaced your monitors. They had their own power supplies and generated a signal that your TV could understand.

What's in the box?

1 The basic Videomaster unit is a black box into which all the various leads are plugged. It gets its power via a short lead which is permanently attached and plugs into your monitor's 12-volt output. (An alternative – and far less clumsy! –power supply is available). This black box is the bit which does all the clever stuff. Also permanently attached is a short lead connecting the CPC's monitor output to the Videomaster unit.



2 The lead which connects the Videomaster to your TV or VCR is a complicated-looking affair with a SCART plug at one end (unless you specify an alternative connection) and two separate connectors at the other. These separate connectors plug into your CPC's monitor output (the DIN plug) and its audio output (3.5mm jack). The rest of the connections are achieved with the festoon of wires that normally connect the CPC with the monitor, but which now are re-routed.

3 Given that the wiring is a little bit complicated, it's just as well that the instructions are very clear. Diagrams are included too.

4 A power supply for the CPC is NOT included as standard. The CPC monitor makes a rather bulky power supply, and that'll be its only function when the Videomaster is connected up! However, Campursoft are selling an independent power supply for £9.99. 464 owners must get this as the 464 monitor will not drive the VideoMaster.

So what's the problem? Well, there are two, really. Firstly, the MP2 has its limitations (see box). Secondly, Amstrad stopped making them, and you can't get them for love nor money now.

Actually, that's not strictly true. As this piece was being written, mail order company WAVE took delivery of a number of MP2s. They are Spanish models and will only work with machines equipped with a SCART input, though.

Video alternative

Which is why Campursoft's new VideoMaster is such an exciting product. While the MP2 produced an RF output for TVs, the VideoMaster produces a 'composite video' output. The technical facts aren't important. Beyond the fact that composite video is a much higher quality system that RF signals AND is accomodated by all video recorders.

Of course, with your CPC connected to your video it's also – effectively – connected to your TV. So the VideoMaster replaces the MP2 *if you have a VCR*). It also lets you record your CPC's ouput onto tape. The MP2 modulator can do that too, but its RF-only output would lead to a critical loss of quality for many applications.

So why should you want to connect your CPC to a video recorder? The more you think about it, the longer the list of reasons becomes...

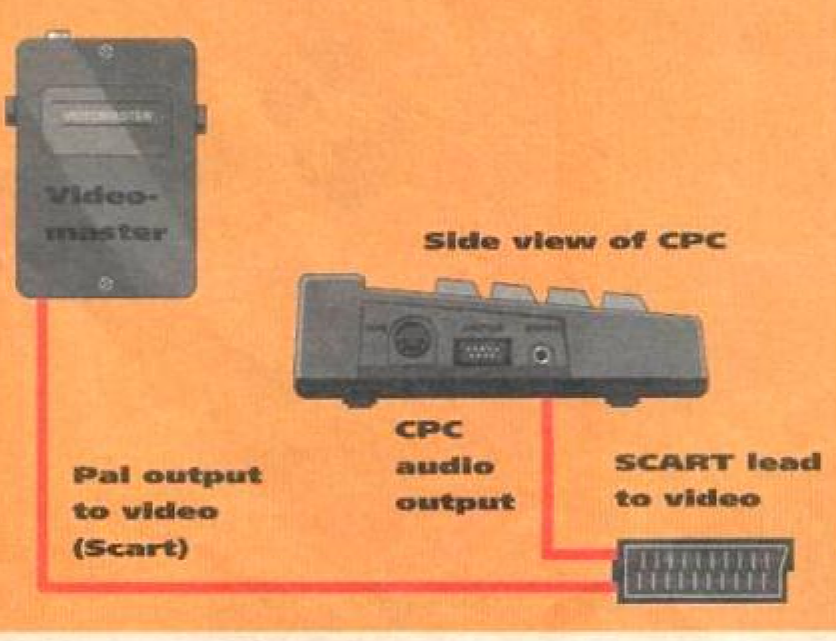
● Video titling

Everyone who uses a domestic VCR keeps favourite tapes for posterity, don't they? And what better way to add the finishing touches to your favourite tapes than by adding titles and/or credits? With the Videomaster it's easy – design your titles in *Advanced Art Studio* or any other graphics program, connect your CPC to the video, display the titles and record them on the video tape for as many seconds as you want!

● Tutorials

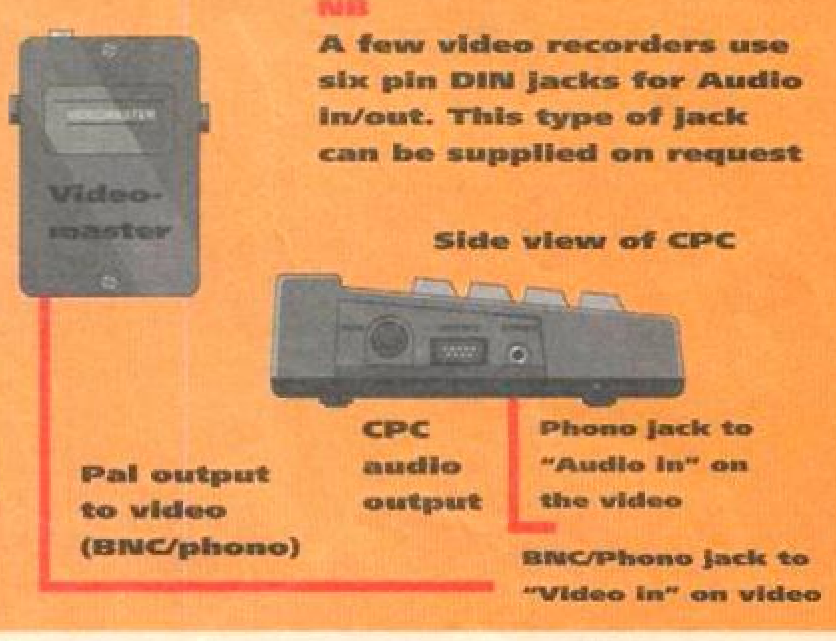
Want to explain a technique to a group of people, or produce a presentation that bit more polished than all the rest? You can do it on the CPC by displaying screens in sequence, of course, but you're not going to see much from more than five

AUDIO CONNECTIONS (SCART)



AUDIO CONNECTIONS (BNC)

NB
A few video recorders use six pin DIN jacks for Audio in/out. This type of jack can be supplied on request



The Amstrad MP2 versus the Videomaster

The Amstrad MP2 has until now been the only choice for CPC owners wanting to use their machines with TVs. This device isn't without its drawbacks, though.

1 Poorer quality?
Any more bad news? Possibly. Campursoft claim that the Videomaster produces better quality images than the Amstrad modulator.

2 No sound
For a start, the MP2 (that's the modulator for the 6128 – the 464's equivalent was the MP1) doesn't handle sound. So although you get the picture on your TV, the sound still comes from your CPC's horrible little internal speaker.

3 No suppliers (except WAVE)
Not only that, Amstrad stopped making modulators some time ago, and it's getting very hard indeed to find them. Occasionally mail order companies like WAVE get hold of some, but you can't rely on it.

4. SCART versions only?
And while the few MP2 modulators that can still be tracked down tend to be continental models with SCART-only outputs, Campursoft can supply the VideoMaster with either SCART, BNU or phono connections. Indeed, they can also supply the 6-pin DIN jacks used by a few manufacturers.

• Against that, the MP2 has a built-in power supply for your CPC. If you use a Videomaster you either have to use your monitor as a power supply (very clumsy and often inconvenient) or buy Campursoft's alternative power supply (at only £9.99, your best bet).

feet away. And what if you're not there to work the machine? Everyone can work a video, though, and the pictures can be displayed on big-screen TVs. Simply record the screens for the appropriate length of time on video tape. You can also add an audio commentary! All you would have to do is record your commentary on a cassette tape, then connect the Videomaster's audio input to a tape player, rather than plugging it into the CPC's audio output.

• Demos
Want to demonstrate a game to a software house or to your friends? Don't try to show them how it works on the spot, just record it as you play – simple!

• Animation
Decent animations are pretty tough to do on the CPC. You can't get many screens in memory at once, and if you can't do that you can't cycle through them quickly enough for smooth animation. But with the Videomaster and a fairly well-specified VCR you can record individual screens on just a couple of frames of video tape each for animations that would make an Amiga owner drool. You'd need a reasonably well-specified VCR, but they're cheap enough these days.

• Stereo sound!
The CPC has stereo sound output. Did you know that? If all you've ever listened to is the internal speaker, probably not. Yet if you have a stereo TV your games will have stereo sound effects and soundtracks. The quality will be much better

• A colour upgrade
And in the middle of all this, let's not forget that the Videomaster is an excellent way of upgrading your mono system to colour!

Looking good?

The VideoMaster's picture quality is terrific. Games look excellent, especially those programmed to run in a comparatively small window. It's great for serious applications like word processing too.

There is one thing to watch out for, though. Some modern TVs have a SCART input, so you may be tempted to plug your VideoMaster straight into your TV. However, Campursoft warn us that while VCRs use a standard SCART socket, TVs are a different kettle of fish. Or, in this case, a different kettle of SCART standards. Even if you have a SCART TV, they still recommend routing the VideoMaster's output through a video recorder for best quality.

There's certainly no faulting the Videomaster's quality of construction or manufacture. Items manufactured in small numbers often look amateur and flimsy. The Videomaster is neither. The leads, in particular, are very well put together.

At £35.99, the Videomaster is great value for money. When you can find them, MP2s nowadays cost no more – but they aren't as good. Frankly, if Campursoft had marketed this product in the days when the MP2 was being sold at £100+, Amstrad would have lost an awful lot of sales.

Power users

The Videomaster needs a 12-volt power supply. It can get this either from the 6128 monitor or Campursoft's own independent power supply unit. These are the choices, then, for CPC owners:

6128 OWNERS can use either their monitors for power or the Campursoft power unit.

464 OWNERS MUST buy the Campursoft power unit (£9.99) with their Videomaster. The 464 monitor has only a 5-volt output which WILL NOT work the VideoMaster.

VERDICT

GOOD NEWS
- Good news
- Inexpensive
- A cheap colour upgrade
- Opens up whole new worlds

BAD NEWS
- Messy wiring

RATING 91%

Win a Videomaster!

Campursoft not only rushed us a Videomaster to review, they said we could give it away as a competition prize too! Before you enter, though, remember that the Videomaster is a 6128-ONLY device. PLUS, our Videomaster has a SCART output, therefore your video recorder MUST have a SCART input.

So, then, here are three little questions to test your technical knowledge:

1. What is the CPC's standard output?
(a) RGB
(b) Composite video
(c) PAL

2. What voltage is the 6128's power supply?
(a) 3 volts
(b) 5 volts
(c) 12 volts

3. Is the CPC's audio output
(a) Mono?
(b) Stereo?
(c) Quadrophonic?

Answers on a postcard please to arrive no later than January 31st 1993. The address is:

Videomaster Competition, Amstrad Action, Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW



GAMESMASTER

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FIRST ISSUE IS ON SALE THURSDAY 3RD DECEMBER

MEGA DRIVE, SUPER NES, AMIGA, NEO GEO, PC ENGINE, MEGA CD, GAME BOY, GAME GEAR AND LYNX!

Balrog

The Balg returns from the Birmingham Adventure Convention (formerly the Adventure Probe Convention) bearing much good news for all adventurers as well as a preview of DOUBLE AGENT...

But first, it's time to catch up on the latest news on the adventure scene. And what a lot there is too... we're building up to a busy Christmas...?

Adventure Probe Bulletin Board

A new bulletin board has recently been put on-line for Amstrad and Amiga adventurers. The *Adventure Probe BBS* run by Bob Adams is open from 10pm till 7am and runs off an Amiga with a 52Mb hard drive. With a database of over 400 solutions, downloadable public domain adventures and more, the BBS sounds a great idea - the Balg nearly rushed out to buy a modem just to connect! *Adventure Probe BBS* can be reached on 0707 323403 and for the comms techies it is scrolling at 8-N-1 with all speeds supported from 300 to 14400 baud.

Adventure Convention Results

The adventure convention also has an award's ceremony and once again many Amstrad games and authors were rewarded for their hard work.

● **Best text-only 8-bit adventure:**

1st Place went to Wow's *The Taxman Cometh* by Steve Clay

2nd and 3rd Place went to *The Spectre of Castle Coris* and *Run Bronwyn Run*, two forthcoming FSF adventures to be released on the

Lords & Ladies of Adventure

This month we present what must be one of the longest *Lords and Ladies* lists ever! Incidentally, for newcomers to this section, here's how it works. There are a number of expert CPC adventurers who have played and solved many games. And some of these experts are willing to share their hard-won knowledge with readers stuck on a game. See if your game is on any of the lists below, then contact the 'Lord' or 'Lady' who's solved it. PLEASE don't ask for full solutions – that's just ridiculous. Keep your query as simple and as brief as possible – remember, these adventurers are voluteers!



Adult II • Adventure Quest • Adventures of Zebedee Gonig • Aftershock • Alien Planet • Al-Strad • Amstrad Action Adventure • Angelicus Saga • Angelique • The Antidote • Apache Gold • Arena • Arnold goes Somewhere Else • Astral Plain • Atalan • Aunt Velmas Coming to Tea • Ballyhoo • The Base • Behind the Lines • Bestiary • The Big Sleaze • The Big Top • Black Fountain • Black Knight • Blue Raider • The Boggit • Book of the Dead • Boredom • Bounty Hunter • Brawn Free • Bugsy • Burlough Castle • Cacodemon • Can I Cheat Death • Captain Kook • The Case of the Mixed up Shymer • Castle Adventure • Castle Warlock • Cave Capers • Cave of Darkness • Caves of the Bew Bews • The Caves • City for Ransom • Colossal Adventure • Colour of Magic • Corya • Warrior-Sage: Dragon • Conch • Countdown To Doom • Crash Landing • Crispen Crunchy • Crown Jewels • Cursed be the City • Dance of the Vampires • Danger Adventurer at Work • Danger Adventurer at Work 2 • Dark Manor • Davy Jones Locker • Deadenders • Desmond & Gertrude • Detective • Dick-Ed • Die you Vicious Fish • Doomlords • The Drake • Druids Moon • Dungeon • Dungeon Adventure • Dungeons Dragons Amethysts • Dungeon of Hell • Escape • Escape from Alien Spaceship • Escape from Koshima • Escape from the Planet of Doom • The Experience • Fantasia Diamond • Fantastic Adventure • Federation • Firestone • Flight from Danger • Flook • Forest at Worlds End • Foxy • The Fugitive • Galaxias • Gerbil Riot 67 • Get Me to the Church • Ghost House • The Gladiator • Grue Knapped • The Guardian • Guild of Thieves • Haunted House(Incentive) • Haunted House(PD) • The Hermitage • Heroes of Karn • Hero Select • Hobble Hunter • The Holiday • The Holiday II • House Out of Town • Hunchback • Ice Wizard • Ichor • Imagination • Inca Curse • Inner Lakes • Into the Mystic • The Island • Island of Chaos • Jason of the Argonauts • Jewels of Babylon • Jolly Poppa Down • Journey to Death • Key to Paradox • Kidnapped • Kingdom of Hamil • Kingdom of Zaar • Labarinth • Last Believer • Leather Goddesses of Phobos • Lighthouse Mystery • Lord of the Rings • Lords of Magic • Lost Shadow • Magicians Apprentice • Mell • Merlin • Message from Andromeda • Miami Mice • Microfair Madness • Microman Project X • The Miser • Moonbase III • Moonmist • Mordons Quest • Morgans Seal • Mountains of Ket • The Mural • Necris Dome • Nite Time • Nova • Nythyhel • Orb Quest • Panic Beneath the Sea • The Pawn • Planet of Death • Pride of Tewksbury • Prison Blues • The Prophecy • Quad-X • Quest for the Golden Egg-cup • The Race • Ransom • Rebel Planet • The Rescue • Return to Eden • Revenge of Chaos • The Revenge • The Ring • Rings of Artek • The River • Roog • Rouge Midget • Seabase Delta • Search for Largo Grann • Search for Mithrillium • Seastalker • Secrets of Ur • Shard of Inovar • Sharpes Deeds • Ship of Doom • Simply Magic • Smashed • Snowball • Souls of Darkon • Space Station • Spaced Out • The Spiro Legacy • Spy-Trek • Storm Mountain • Stripy • Stryptiche • Subsunk • Supastore • Swamp Thing • Talisman of Lost Souls • Teacher Trouble • Tealand • The Test • Theseus and the Monotaur • Thieves Tale • Time • Time Traveller • Tizpan Lord of the Jungle • Top Secret • Total Reality Delusion • Travel • The Traveller • Treasure Island • Treasure Tunnels • The Trial of Arnold Blackwood • Underground Adventure • Unknown Planet • Use Your Loaf • Venom • Videoworld • Warlord • The Well • Welladay • Werewolf Simulator • Winter Wonderland • Wise and Fool of Arnold Blackwood • Worm In Paradise.

Phil Reynolds, 36 Grasmere Road, Royton, Oldham, Lancashire, OL2 6SR

Colour of Magic • DAA • 4th Protocol • Gems of Stradus • Not a Penny More Not a Penny Less • Return to Eden • Scary Tales & Vera Cruz Affair.

William Conlon, 171 Mulvey Park, Dundrum, Dublin 14, Ireland

Al-Strad • Big Sleaze • Dracula • Frankenstein • Gnome Ranger • Grue-Knapped • Hobbit • Kentilla • Lord of the Rings • Lords of Time • Not a Penny More Not a Penny Less (part 1) • Panic Beneath the Sea (part 1) • Price of Magick • Quest for the Golden Egg-cup • Scapeghost • Shadows of Mordor • Smirking Horror & Wolfman

Legolas the Irish Half-Elf, 14 Curley Hill, Strabane, Co. Tyrone, N. Ireland BT82 8LP

Adventurers' Workshop label.

- **Best text-only 16-bit adventure:**

The Four Symbols by the Grue (soon to be converted to the CPC by Phil Reynolds)

- **Best text adventure author:**

1st: Larry Horsfield (of *Magnetic Moon* and *Axe of Kolt* fame)
2nd: Grue
3rd: Simon Avery/Jack Lockerby

- **Best homegrown adventure company**

WoW Software, run by Joan Pancott HPilg

- **Most helpful adventurer:**

Joan Pancott HPilg

- **Adventurer of the Year**

1st: Mandy Rodrigues HBalg
2nd: Lorna Patterson HBalg

- **Lords of Chaos champion:**

The Balrog! (For the second year running.)

New games on the way!

The Balg was amazed at the number of games that were either under development/conversion or soon to be released on the little Amstrad...

The Adventure Workshop is planning to convert many Spectrum titles to the Amstrad as well as continuing with releasing original releases. New games include *The Ellisnore Diamond*, *Homicide Hotel* and *Starflaws* (all disk-only) and the tape/disk games *Dave Dangerous*, *A Dark Sky over Paradise* and *Border Harrier*. For more details, write to: Phil Reynolds, 36 Grasmere Road, Royton, Oldham, Lancashire OL2 6SR.

Jason Davis, author of *Smirking Horror*, seemed to be hiding from the Balg all convention but eventually we met and he mentioned another new game in the pipeline – hopefully it will be of the quality of his previous titles.

Simon Avery, one of the most prolific adventure authors, has a queue of games out soon from WoW or on the PD market – watch out for reviews soon.

Other adventure convention news

Adventure PD now has more than 20 disks of Amstrad adventures as well as a new adventure label called Dragonsoft. Although Dragonsoft isn't public domain, the disks are available at PD prices. Write to: Debby Howard HBalg, 10 Overton Road, Abbey Wood, London SE2 9SD.

Simon Avery is still operating his 'Adventure Finder' service; if you want to buy an adventure, send Simon a stamped self-ad

Double Agent

£4.95 disk, CPM + only • Tom Frost, Tartan Software, 61 Bailie Norrie Crescent, Montrose, Angus, Scotland DD10

Your starship has been sent to the planet Marego to rescue the inhabitants from an evil rebel force which is destroying the population with a 'crystal of power'. Unfortunately, your exploration party was captured, tortured and killed and only two agents managed to escape. Even worse is that these two agents are near brain-dead... but they do still have intact communicators.

You, the intrepid adventurer, must thus guide the two agents (who each have different individual skills) to retrieve the lethal crystal as well as obtaining rock, soil and water samples from the planet surface.

Double Agent is a classic Spectrum game that has been converted to the CPC by Tom Frost, otherwise known as Tartan Tom. The control system of two separate characters is very original and implemented well and there is a competition associated with the game: £50 will be awarded to the person who can complete the game in the smallest number of moves.

Unfortunately, the Balg, master adventurer, hit a problem when reviewing *Double Agent*; I got stuck early on!

From what the Balg saw of the game it does appear well written (even though there SEEM to be words IN capitals mid way through most sentences!) and the prize is certainly an incentive to play but I would not like to comment on the overall quality of the game.

However, it did get a good reception on the Spectrum, and it should be worth buying both for the competition and to see if you can get further than the Balg!

Balrog's Cluepot

This month's sniff of clues comes from Daniel Pooley, an anonymous reader from Aylesbury, Stuart Farmer and Laurence Boyce from Leeds...

Classic Adventure

- Feed the bear.
- Pour oil on the rusty door.
- Drop the vase on the velvet pillow, otherwise it will break.
- Open the clam with the trident.
- In the room where you hear "Plugh", say "Plover".
- Wave the rod by the fissure.

Dragons of Flame

- Give 'Wyrm Slayer' to Riverwind and 'use' it. Trade Riverwinds Longsword +2 to Caramon and use it.
- Find Traps, Heal Crucial Wounds and prayer do not work well and are a waste of charges.
- Cast Heal wounds, Fireball and web. These cost a lot so be careful.
- The mirror protects you from the medusa.
- Drop the copper ball to get the pellet.
- The Ulna, Thigh and skull are to be placed in the cauldron to call Ai. Once there in, type "Cauldron, Achad" and he will appear.
- The flask in Morfang enables you to walk over the chasm.
- The clasp in Trollwynde enables you to walk through the fire.
- The iron clasp enables you to walk past the hydra in the Rook of hydra.
- To get past the water type "Water, fall"
- To get past Rabak in the Doubt of Rabak type "Rabak, water" and he will go down.
- When invoking, the sword protects you from Astarot, the ruby protects you from Asmodee, the mantis protects you from Belezbar and the sunflower from Magot.
- To find phoenix, find the nest in Nidus, drop an egg in it (make sure you have the clasp on you) and type "Nest, Phoenix" and he will appear.

Necris Dome

- Search all mandroids immediately after

Type-i

Smoulder

£20 WINNER

Or Before-Smoulder, to give it its full name (a home-brew version of *After-Burner*, geddit?), Daniel Argent of Brentwood's flying ace game is programmed for two players and thrusts each into a frantic free-for-all. Graphics and spot effects are simple (what do you expect from 2K of code?) but it's addictive and fun. Controls are Z, X and \ left right and fire respectively for player one, and keypad 1, 2 and 6 left, right and fire for player 2.

```
{CqAv} 10 SYMBOL 245,0,8,28,54,127,8,28,0
{PoAv} 20 SYMBOL 246,0,28,8,127,54,28,8,0
{HuBj} 30 SYMBOL 247,0,0,61,79,60,36,0,0
{EiBs} 40 MODE 1:BORDER 1:INK 0,1:PAPER 0:INK
       1,24:PEN 1
{AiAw} 50 PRINT"BEFORE-SMOULDER"
{GvAu} 60 PRINT"<><><><><><><>"
{AiAl} 70 PRINT
{GsAw} 80 PRINT CHR$(164);"D.ARGENT 1992"
{IkAx} 90 PRINT"            PRESS ANY KEY TO
       PLAY"
{NxBj} 100 PRINT:PRINT:PRINT"WOOSH,BANG,WOL-
       LOP!"
{MjBo} 110 PRINT"OH WELL,I CAN ALWAYS BUY A NEW
       PLANE!!"
{KnBk} 120 PRINT:PRINT STRING$(120,CHR$(206))
{OuBi} 130 PRINT:PRINT:PRINT:PRINT:PRINT
{FiAv} 140 PRINT STRING$(40,CHR$(207))
{LiAo} 150 LET U=35:I=12
{JoAp} 160 FOR L=1 TO 8
{KjAv} 170 LOCATE U+L,I-L:PRINT" "
{AkBn} 180 A$=INKEY$:IF INKEY$<>"" THEN 220
{LpAx} 190 LOCATE U-L,I+L:PRINT CHR$(247)
{ItAl} 200 NEXT L
{FnAq} 210 CALL &BB18
{PmAl} 220 MODE 0
{IpAm} 230 BORDER 0
{OwAl} 240 INK 0,22
{JwAl} 250 INK 1,0
{EtAp} 260 MOVE 0,190
{CmAq} 270 DRAW 650,190
```

We've got no fewer than five readers' programs for you this month, and all shorties too! As every, if you've got any BASIC programs you think are good enough for these pages, send them in to: Type-ins, Amstrad Action, Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW

```
{DoAl} 280 PEN 3
{EjBl} 290 LOCATE 7,25:PRINT
       CHR$(143);CHR$(143)
{HmAl} 300 PEN 8
{DlBo} 310 LOCATE 15,1:PRINT
       CHR$(143);CHR$(143)
{FvAo} 320 x=7:y=24
{LuAm} 330 a=15:b=2
{NvAl} 340 PEN 1
{HwAt} 350 LOCATE x,y:PRINT" "
{CoAt} 360 LOCATE a,b:PRINT" "
{AlAn} 370 a$=INKEY$
{IiBl} 380 IF a$="Z" OR  a$="z" THEN x=x-1
{FmBk} 390 IF a$="X" OR a$="x" THEN x=x+1
{FqAv} 400 IF a$="1" THEN a=a-1
{BmAt} 410 IF a$="2" THEN a=a+1
{CnAw} 420 IF a$="\" THEN GOSUB 580
{HoAw} 430 IF a$="6" THEN GOSUB 630
{LsAw} 440 IF x=1 THEN x=24
{GkAv} 450 IF x=25 THEN x=2
{BpAs} 460 IF a=1 THEN a=24
{LwAr} 470 IF a=25 THEN a=2
{HmAu} 480 IF b=24 THEN b=2
{EjAt} 490 IF y=2 THEN y=24
{FsAo} 500 LET b=b+1
{CsAm} 510 y=y-1
{FvAl} 520 PEN 3
{CuAw} 530 LOCATE x,y:PRINT CHR$(245)
{CwAm} 540 PEN 8
{EwAv} 550 LOCATE a,b:PRINT CHR$(246)
{LjAt} 560 SOUND 1,4,5,6,7,8,9
{JmAm} 570 GOTO 350
{PkBr} 580 PEN 1:FOR n=1 TO 5:LOCATE x,y-
       n:PRINT"."
{HpBj} 590 IF a=x AND b=y-n THEN GOTO 680
{LjAk} 600 NEXT n
{PxBp} 610 FOR n=1 TO 5:LOCATE x,y-n:PRINT"
       ":NEXT n
{OuAn} 620 RETURN
{JtBq} 630 PEN 1:FOR n=1 TO 5:LOCATE
       a,b+n:PRINT"."
{NvBi} 640 IF a=x AND y=b+n THEN GOTO 690
{DmAn} 650 NEXT n
{DnBo} 660 FOR n=1 TO 5:LOCATE a,b+n:PRINT"
       ":NEXT n
{IxAn} 670 RETURN
{BmDp} 680 CLS:MODE 1:PRINT"PLAYER 2 HIT":FOR
       n=300 TO 400:SOUND 1,n,7:NEXT n:SOUND
       1,3,4,5,6,7,8:CALL &BB18:RUN
{NsDo} 690 CLS:MODE 1:PRINT"PLAYER 1 HIT":FOR
       n=300 TO 400:SOUND 1,n,7:NEXT n:SOUND
       1,3,4,5,6,7,8:CALL &BB18:RUN
```

Inflation Calculator

£20 WINNER

In these extremely trying financial times, those earning incomes have to watch every penny and, unless you're currently heading one of the recently privatised public-sector corporations such as gas, water or the like, keep a close eye on pay increases to ensure they're in line with inflation. D. Jarret's *Inflation Calculator* enables you to do just that. Fully menu-driven, the program prompts you for last year's salary, this year's, and the current rate of inflation and then tells you whether you should be getting more or less (in order to keep in line with inflation...). D Jarret's 13, and hails from Romford in Essex.

```
{MiAl} 20 MODE 2
{PpAp} 30 SYMBOL AFTER 33
{ExBl} 40 SYMBOL
       48,255,255,255,255,255,255,255,255
{FsAt} 50 PRINT"0000 0  0 0000 0   0000 0000
       0000 0000 0  0"
```

Basic tutorial... Basic tutorial... Basic tutorial...

Last month, we enlarged on our discussion of the ON BREAK construct provided by Amstrad BASIC to help prevent tampering, and introduced the subroutine (in the form of a password check) in order to make ON BREAK really useful. Here's a reminder of the code:

```
5 REM This is a program to count the characters
  in a string
10 VALID$="valid"
15 ON BREAK GOSUB 500
20 FOR CNT=1 to 5
30 A$=""
40 INPUT "Please type a string"; A$
50 IF A$="" THEN 40
60 IF ASC(A$)<65 OR ASC(A$)>122 THEN PRINT
  "Invalid input. Try again\": GOTO 30
70 PRINT "The string '"A$"' is "LEN (A$) "char-
  acters long."
80 NEXT CNT
90 END
500 REM This code checks for a valid program
   access
510 CLS: LOCATE 15,7
520 PRINT "ACCESS ATTEMPT - ENTER PASSWORD"
530 LOCATE 20,10
540 INPUT "Enter password:"; PASS$
550 IF PASS$="" THEN 540
560 IF ASC(PASS$)<>ASC(VALID$) THEN CLS:LOCATE
   15,15:PRINT "INVALID PzASSWORD": NEW
570 RETURN
```

As explained last month, lines 10 and 15 simply set up a valid password and set the ON BREAK flag. The rest of the code up to line 500 is our old favourite character counting nonsense (see previous issues for a suitable explanation). But before we come to

ns

```
{JtAs} 60 PRINT" 00  00 0 0    0   0  0  00
       00  0  0 00 0"
{FuAt} 70 PRINT" 00  0 00 00   0   0000  00
       00  0  0 0 00"
{NvAs} 80 PRINT" 00  0  0 0    0   0  0  00
       00  0  0 0  0"
{CwAt} 90 PRINT"0000 0  0 0    000 0  0  00
       0000 0000 0  0"
{KiAr} 100 PRINT:PRINT:PRINT
{NqAu} 110 PRINT"0000 0000 0   0000 0   0 0
       0000 0000 0000 000"
{DsAv} 120 PRINT"0    0  0 0   0    0   0 0   0
       0  00  0  0 0  0"
{LuAu} 130 PRINT"0    0000 0   0    0   0 0
       0000  00  0  0 000"
{PwAt} 140 PRINT"0    0  0 0   0    0   0 0   0
       0  00  0  0 0 0"
{BiAu} 150 PRINT"0000 0  0 000 000  00000 000 0
       0  00  0000 0  0"
{OqCj} 160 LOCATE 10,25:PRINT"WRITEN AND CRE-
       ATED BY DAVID JARRETT AGE 13........."
{EiAu} 170 FOR T=1 TO 5000:NEXT T
{EpAt} 180 CLS:SYMBOL AFTER 32
{KiAl} 190 MODE 1
{OlBu} 200 LOCATE 12,12:PRINT"PLEASE ENTER
       INCOME FOR LAST YEAR"
{KlAm} 210 INPUT L
{IjBv} 220 LOCATE 12,14:PRINT"PLEASE ENTER
       INCOME FOR THIS YEAR"
{NoAl} 230 INPUT Y
{GrBx} 240 LOCATE 12,16:PRINT"WHAT IS THE CUR-
       RENT INFLATION RATE"
{HnAl} 250 INPUT R
{HsAq} 340 LET M=L+(L*R)/100
{PnAl} 350 I=Y-L
{DjAq} 360 P=(I/L)*100
{CmAm} 370 S=M-Y
{JrAk} 380 CLS
{NvBo} 390 LOCATE 12,12:PRINT"YOUR INCREASE IS
       ";I
{GtAo} 391 PP=ABS(P)
{MnBu} 400 LOCATE  12,13:PRINT"INCREASE AS A
       PERCENTAGE: ";PP;"%"
{AqBu} 410 LOCATE 12,14:PRINT"TO KEEP UP INFLA-
       TION YOU SHOULD"
{MoBi} 420 LOCATE 12,16:PRINT"RECIVE ";M
{DlAw} 422 FOR T=1 TO 3000:NEXT T
{AvAs} 430 IF S=0 THEN 520
{DoAt} 440 IF S>0 THEN 490
{CvAq} 460 LET S=ABS(S)
{FnBx} 470 CLS:LOCATE 12,12:PRINT"YOU ARE GET-
       TING ";S;" TO MUCH"
{GwBi} 480 G$=INKEY$:IF G$=" " THEN 480
{IkAl} 490 RUN
{ImCj} 500 CLS:LOCATE 12,12:PRINT"YOUR PAY IS
       ";S;" BEHIND INFLATION"
{AnAm} 510 GOTO 480
{NuBv} 520 CLS:LOCATE 12,12:PRINT"YOU INCREASE
       IS EXACTLY IN LINE"
{PjBl} 530 LOCATE 12,14:PRINT"WITH INFLATION"
{ApAn} 540 GOTO 480
```

Blocks

£20 WINNER

Although most gamers prefer a good hack and slash to half and hour in the company of a mind-stretching puzzle, this latter type of game is often the one you'll return to time and again. Simon Clark of Princes Risborough, Bucks, realised just that, and came up with a fiendishly difficult and fun-to-do puzzle involving three pegs, half a dozen blocks and your wily old CPC. All you have to do is move the blocks from one peg to another without putting larger block over a smaller one. *Blocks* has six skill levels – full instructions within the program.

```
{OwHv} 10 MODE 2:PRINT"BLOCKS BY
       S.CLARK":LOCATE 1,5:PRINT"THE IDEA OF
       THE GAME IS TO MOVE THE BLOCKS FROM ONE
       PEG TO ANOTHER WITHOUT       PLACING A
       LARGER ONE ONTO A SMALLER ONE.":LOCATE
       1,10:INPUT"WHICH LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY (1-
       6) ";r:r=r+2:DIM n(3,r+3):CLS
{BsBl} 20 n(1,0)=r:FOR a=1 TO r:n(1,a)=r+1-
       a:NEXT
{AmBx} 30 FOR a=1 TO 3:FOR b=1 TO r+3:LOCATE
       a*20-n(a,b),13-b:k$=CHR$(7)
{DoCl} 40 PRINT STRING$(n(a,b)*2+1,143):NEXT
       b:LOCATE a*20-1,14:PRINT STR$(a):NEXT
{HkBr} 50 FOR a=2 TO 3:FOR b=1 TO
       r:x=1+(n(a,b)<>(r+1-b)):NEXT
{FtEq} 60 IF x THEN LOCATE 25,17:PRINT"Well
       done. It took you"n"moves":LOCATE
       25,18:INPUT "Would you like to play
       again ";loop$:GOTO 110 ELSE NEXT
{AxCn} 70 LOCATE 3,16:INPUT"Move from
       ";f:LOCATE 5,18:INPUT"Move to
       ";t:x=n(f,0)
{HvCn} 80 y=n(t,0):IF x=0 OR (y>0 AND
       n(t,y)<n(f,x)) OR t=f THEN PRINT k$:GOTO
       70
```

Famous Five!

That's what we're offering: five minutes of glorious fame, and masses of cash (well, your name in print and twenty quid, anyway...). So if you're a brill BASIC programmer writing code which knocks spots off anything published here – send it in! Your name in lights and big prize money is a-waiting...

Here's a few dos and don'ts to help you on your way:

- **DO** include your name and address with your tape or disk
- **DO** include an SAE if you want material returned
- **DO** write your application on the back of a fiver if you want to jump to the head of the queue
- **DO** include a *written* description of your program and details of its operation – on-disk doc files won't do!
- **DON'T** include instructions saying "...here's my program *Hot-Dots*, the name speaks for itself...", because it doesn't! If you can't be bothered to describe what it does, I can't be bothered to load it up, OK?

```
{ArCn} 90 n(t,n(t,0)+1)=n(f,n(f,0)):n(f,n
       (f,0))=0:n(f,0)=n(f,0)-1:n(t,0)=n(t,0)+1
{MkAt} 100 CLS:n=n+1:GOTO 30
{AxBq} 110 IF loop$="Y" OR loop$="y" THEN RUN
{LlBq} 120 IF loop$-"N" OR loop$="n" THEN END
```

Simpson

£20 WINNER

Here's a dinky little program to calculate the area under a curve using either Simpson's rule or the Trapesium rule. OK, so it's dull, but if you need to calculate the area under a curve say, for school assignments and so on, and can't, then Simpson is going to come in very handy indeed...

Written by Tony Watson of Oswestry, Shropshire, *Simpson* features comprehensive prompting through and require only 2K of code.

```
{BmBm} 10 'Simpson's Rule and Trapezium Rule
{OsAn} 20 'T.E.Watson
{AqAq} 30 DEF FNx=SQR(1+x↑2)
{KkBk} 40 INK 0,13:INK 1,0:BORDER 3:MODE 2:ZONE
       16
{KqBj} 50 CLS:INPUT"Enter number of ordinates
       ",n
```

Basic tutorial... Basic tutorial... Basic tutorial...

the password handling subroutine, let's discuss just what constitutes a subroutine.

A subroutine is a collection of BASIC statements, usually placed at the end of a program (although there are good reasons to place it at the beginning – more in a future instalment) accessed individually by the BASIC keyword GOSUB, followed by a line number (for example, GOSUB 500).

When the BASIC interpreter encounters the GOSUB keyword, it transfers operation to the line specified within the GOSUB. Processing continues from that line until GOSUB's associated keyword RETURN is encountered, whereupon control returns to the very next statement following the original GOSUB (that is, usually the next *line*, but it could be the next statement after a colon on the same line).

But why use a subroutine. Well, by using subroutines, tasks can be broken down into smaller and smaller parts, making a program easier to write and far more easier to read. And as an added and welcome bonus, debugging is greatly assisted too! All you have to do is decide what you want the program to do, break it up into individual tasks, and code each of these tasks as a subroutine.

Provide a main or control program in order to call the subroutines in the desired order, and Bob's your uncle, simple and clear programs!

The more advanced BASICs of recent years enable subroutines to be assigned a suitable name such as, in this case for example, 'Password_check'. To use the subroutine all you have to do is give its name. This makes for clearer, more readable code. However, Amstrad BASIC's GOSUB <line number> is perfectly usable and you should make use of it wherever you can.

Experienced programmers always assign subrou-

Using Type-writer

If you're a comparative newcomer to *Amstrad Action* you're probably wondering about those funny four-letter codes in the curly brackets printed at the start of each line of a listing. These are here to help you type the programs in without making any mistakes. To use the system, first of all you have to run the *Type-Writer* program (printed in this box). From now on, for every line that appears on the screen, a four-digit 'checksum' is displayed too. So that when you type in a line printed on this page, your computer should display on-screen the same code as the one printed in the magazine. If it doesn't, you know you've made a mistake!

```
10 'Type-Writer
20 'Public Domain, by Pat McDonald
30 'Amstrad Action June 1989
40 flag=0:PRINT:INPUT"Am I a 464 (Daft ques-
   tion!)";h$
50 a=HIMEM-93:MEMORY a-1:RESTORE 200
60 FOR b=a TO a+&5D
70 READ c$:d=VAL("&"+c$)
80 POKE b,d:e=e+d
90 NEXT b
100 IF e<>10566 THEN PRINT"Error in data.
   Please Check.":END
110 IF LEFT$(h$,1)="y"OR LEFT$(h$,1)="Y"THEN
   POKE a+8,&A4
120 z=a+34:e=0
130 f=ABS(INT(z/256))
140 g=ABS(((z/256)-f)*256)
150 POKE a+40,g:POKE a+41,f:POKE a+45,g
160 POKE a+46,f:POKE a+57,g:POKE a+58,f
170 POKE a+65,g:POKE a+66,f:POKE a+77,g
180 POKE a+78,f:POKE a+85,g:POKE a+86,f
190 POKE a+90,g:POKE a+91,f
200 DATA e5,c5,f5,fe,0d,20,18,21
210 DATA 8a,ac,01,00,06,51,59,7e
220 DATA fe,00,28,11,47,81,10,fd
230 DATA 4f,eb,09,eb,23,18,f0,f1
240 DATA c1,e1,cf,fe,93,3e,20,cd
250 DATA 22,90,3e,7b,cd,22,90,7b
260 DATA 07,07,07,07,e6,0f,c6,41
270 DATA cd,22,90,7b,e6,0f,c6,69
280 DATA cd,22,90,7a,07,07,07,07
290 DATA e6,0f,c6,41,cd,22,90,7a
300 DATA e6,0f,c6,69,cd,22,90,3e
310 DATA 7d,cd,22,90,18,c1,4d,61
320 g=g-34
330 IF flag=0 THEN flag=1 ELSE GOTO 370
340 POKE a+35,PEEK(&BB5B):POKE
   a+36,PEEK(&BB5C)
350 POKE &BB5A,&C3:POKE &BB5B,g:POKE &BB5C,f
360 GOTO 50
370 POKE a+35,PEEK(&BD2C):POKE
   a+36,PEEK(&BD2D)
380 POKE &BD2B,&C3:POKE &BD2C,g:POKE &BD2D,f
```

```
{GlBm} 60 INPUT"Enter upper and lower limits
       ",b,a
{PwAn} 70 h=(b-a)/(n-1)
{EuBo} 80 INPUT"Simpson's Rule or Trapezium
       Rule (S/T)";a$
{EvBi} 90 IF LOWER$(a$)="t" THEN 240
{OsAl} 100 flag=-1
{MxBp} 110 CLS:PRINT" x"," f(x)"," 2*f(x)","
       4*f(x)"
{FjBi} 120 MOVE 0,377:DRAWR 480,0:PRINT
{GwAs} 130 FOR x=a TO b STEP h
{MuBu} 140 IF x=a OR x=b THEN sum=sum+FNx:PRINT
       x,FNx:GOTO 190
{FuAo} 150 PRINT x,FNx,
{MtBu} 160 IF NOT flag THEN g=4*FNx:PRINT,g
       ELSE g=2*FNx:PRINT g
{DkAr} 170 sum=sum+g
{KjAo} 180 flag=NOT flag
{JrAt} 190 count=count+1:NEXT
{AoBr} 200 IF count<>n THEN
       x=b:sum=sum+FNx:PRINT x,FNx
{KuAo} 210 area=sum*h/3
{CnBi} 220 PRINT:PRINT,"Area ="area
{OqAk} 230 END
{AkAt} 240 CLS:PRINT" x"," f(x)"
{OxAw} 250 MOVE 0,377:DRAWR 240,0:PRINT
{HtAs} 260 FOR x=a TO b STEP h
{PmBt} 270 IF x=a OR x=b THEN sum=sum+FNx:PRINT
       x,FNx:GOTO 290
{MjAw} 280 PRINT x,FNx:sum=sum+2*FNx
{IlAt} 290 count=count+1:NEXT
{DpBr} 300 IF count<>n THEN
       x=b:sum=sum+FNx:PRINT x,FNx
{GmAp} 310 area=h*sum/2
{LqAx} 320 PRINT:PRINT,"Area ="area
```

Word Processor

£20 WINNER

Although no rival to the likes of *Protext*, Peter Davis's *Word Processor* is still a very useful snippet of code. You can type short notes and letters and with ease, save them or load them from disk or tape for further editing.

The main use, however, is for addressing envelopes – a job which can be a nightmare using an ordinary word processor but is easy using a simple program like *Word Processor*. The program is fully menu-driven.

```
{GpAk} 10 CLS
{JkBj} 20 PRINT "          PETER DAVIS' WORD-
       PROCESSOR
{LvBj} 30 PRINT "          -----------------------
       ---
{LsAx} 40 PRINT "             COPYRIGHT 1991"
{CrAv} 50 PRINT "             --------------
{BsAo} 60 PRINT:PRINT
{BwAr} 70 PRINT"                  MENU"
{CnAq} 80 PRINT"                  ----
{KvAo} 90 PRINT:PRINT
{JuAl} 110 PRINT
{AvAw} 120 PRINT"            (A) CREATE A FILE"
{MxAv} 130 PRINT"            (B) PRINT A FILE"
{EiBi} 140 PRINT"            (C) RETURN TO
       BASIC"
{EsBi} 150 PRINT"            (D) SELECT LINE
       WIDTH
{GnAx} 160 PRINT"            (E) DELETE A FILE
{FlAp} 170 PRINT:PRINT
{DwBp} 180 PRINT "       THIS PROGRAM IS PUBLIC
       DOMAIN"
{CrBl} 190 PRINT "       ----------------------
       ------"
{KkBo} 200 PRINT "      PLEASE DON'T ALTER THIS
       PROGRAM"
{PiBm} 210 PRINT "      -----------------------
       -------
{NnAs} 220 PRINT "                 THANK YOU
{GxAv} 230 PRINT "                 ---------
{AoBi} 240 I$=INKEY$:IF I$="" THEN 240
{KxAx} 250 IF I$="A" THEN GOTO 300
{OnBi} 260 IF I$="B" THEN GOTO 370
{NpAx} 270 IF I$="C" THEN GOTO 390
{HwAx} 280 IF I$="D" THEN GOTO 400
{EjBi} 290 IF I$="E" THEN GOTO 450
{FpBi} 300 CLS:PRINT"DOCUMENT NAME PLEASE"D$
{FvBq} 310 REM REMEMBER TO PRESS RETURN EVERY 6
       LINES
{KnAm} 320 INPUT D$
{NnAk} 330 CLS
{FmAo} 340 PRINT D$
{EoAn} 350 INPUT E$
{CiBn} 360 IF INKEY(67)<>0 THEN CLS:GOTO 70
{GrAs} 370 PRINT "PRINTING "D$
{EjBl} 380 PRINT #8,D$:PRINT #8,E$:CLS:GOTO 70
{LlAn} 390 |BASIC
{FvCs} 400 CLS:PRINT"ENTER WIDTH:MODE 0 (20
       CHARACTERS)/MODE 1 (40 CHARACTERS)/MODE
       2 (80 CHARACTERS)"W$
{LkAl} 410 INPUT W$
{CpBj} 420 IF W$="0" THEN MODE 0:GOTO 10
{HwBk} 430 IF W$="1" THEN MODE 1:GOTO 10
{NnBk} 440 IF W$="2" THEN MODE 2:GOTO 10
{KjAx} 450 LET E$="":LET D$="":GOTO 10
```

Basic tutorial... Basic tutorial... Basic tutorial

tines to distinct line numbers too. What do we mean by distinct? Well, multiples of say, 100, such as 100, 200, 300 and so on. If that's not enough, then space the subroutines in multiples of 200 or 500, but try to stay away from a collection of subroutines like this:

```
GOSUB 47
GOSUB 218
GOSUB 1417
```

...and the like. You'll lose the all-important clarity.

One thing to watch when using GOSUB is always to include both parts of the construct. That is, GOSUB and RETURN. Failure to include the former (i.e. by a spurious addition of the latter) will result in an 'Unexpected RETURN in line <number>' BASIC error. The CPC does, at least, tell you where it found the RETURN without an associated GOSUB, enabling you to debug easily, but the fun starts when it *is* a valid RETURN, and you can't discover what's happened to the GOSUB you just *know* you put in there...

Worse still, is including a GOSUB but failing to attach a valid RETURN. Instead of performing your routine, then skipping back (RETURNing) to the main program, BASIC will continue merrily on its way though code which is has no business to be accessing (i.e. whatever's after the subroutine!). This type of error can be very difficult for the novice to debug.

So. Subroutines aid clarity and ease the task of programming. When should you use them? As soon as your program requires what can be thought of as an 'extra' task. In the case of our character counter, the password routine. It's an extra addition, and a perfect candidate for a GOSUB.

Next month, we'll get closer to the subroutine by examining the password routine in detail.

AA SMALL ADS

For Sale

RS232 PACE INTERFACE with built in Commstar software, £35. Unboxed (no instructions). Also DK Tronics 64K Silicon disk, £45. Suitable for CPC464 only. (unboxed). Call Ewan (0698 424935.

£70 OF DISK BASED original games for sale, plus mouse and AA nos 5-83. Will accept any reasonable offer for all or part. Also 2nd disk drive. Call Bath (0225) 469677.

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CPC6128 COLOUR MONITOR, Multiface 2, serious software and some games, Speech, Mini Office II, DMP2160 printer tape deck, all leads and manuals. Very good condition. £300 o.n.o. Tel 081-650 8860.

AMSTRAD CPC HARDWARE: Citizen 120D+ printer, brand new, £75; Multiface two, perfect working order, £30. Vidi-CPC video digitiser, excellent condition, £65. Contact Simon on (0205) 820719.

AMSTRAD CPC6128, colour monitor, Multiface II, tape and disk software, Mini Office II, Money Manager, OCP Art, scores of recent games and magazines. £225 o.n.o. Phone David 081-979 1992 (Middx).

CPC464 COLOUR MONITOR, joystick 130+ games, (Elite, WWF, Barbarian I and II), manual. Excellent condition, worth over £900. Will accept £250 o.n.o. Buyer collects. Phone Darren (evenings only). 081-989 8555.

CPC464 WITH COLOUR MONITOR, joystick, 50 games inc Simpsons, Turtles etc, manual. Magazines £165 o.n.o. Ring Simon Tomson on (0743) 232312 (Shrewsbury) after 4pm.

AMSTRAD ACTION MAGAZINES no 23-80 including tapes, £40 o.n.o. or separately for £2.00. New Computer Express magazines issues 4 -60, £20 o.n.o. Phone Giles after 4.30pm on Cheltenham (0242) 524212.

AMSTRAD CPC464 for sale. 15 AA covertapes, 60 games, manual, Light Pen without manual (DK Tronics), colour monitor, games include Lemmings, Rick Dangerous, Turrican II, Hero Quest and Skweek. £1.50. Phone Timothy (0238) 541716.

AMSTRAD DDI-1 disk drive with interface. Boxed, very good condition £80 o.n.o. Amstrad GX4000 with Burnin Rubber and Robocop 2, cartridges. £35 o.n.o., boxed. Phone Locksheath (0489) 583347 after 5pm.

FOR SALE, TAPE GAMES Light Corridor, £2. At £1:- Miami Cobra, Sailing, Dizzy Dice, Lop Ears, Countdown, Jack Ripper II, and Easy Amsword 30p. C Russell, 57 Brookside Close, S. Harrow, Middlesex, HA2 9AW.

FOR SALE. Amstrad 464 Plus and Seikosha printer. Over 30 games and two paddle controllers. All in good condition, manuals included. Worth £700. Will accept £450 o.n.o. Telephone Stuart on 081-443 4586.

AMSTRAD 464+ with colour monitor and over £800 worth of software, 2 joysticks, 19 copies of AA, worth over £1000. Sell for £320. Matthew Harris (0280) 704134.

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CPC464 GREEN SCREEN with manual. For sale £70. Also over 40 games including Adventures from £1. Simon (0384) 236816.

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Wanted

DOES ANYONE OUT THERE HAVE a DDI disk drive in good condition that they would like to sell to me? Good price paid Mr P. Ramsay, 12 Naseby Avenue, Blackley, Manchester, M9 2JJ.

WANTED on disk. Lemmings, Weltris; and good book on CP/M. C. Russell, 57 Brookside Close, S. Harrow, Middlesex, HA2 9AW.

WANTED AA ISSUE NUMBER 69 complete with tape number 3 boxed original (not a copy). Will pay up to original cover price. Phone Daniel on Gloucester (0452) 506095.

CIRCUIT DIAGRAM to enable the R.G.B. output from 6128 to be converted to composite video for connection into video recorder, willing to pay for information. Tel (0634) 240867.

WANTED DESPERATELY these games: Continental Circus, Afterburner, Lotus Esprit, Turbo Challenge and Knightmare for the CPC464 Amstrad tape only. Will swap from list. Please send s.a.e. Matthew Glover, 12 Garrick Street, Alvaston, Derby, DE2 8PT.

CASTLE MASTER 2 The Crypt, Cassette, 464 or The Domie, Compilation Cassette 464. Virtual Worlds. Driller, Total Eclipse, Castle Master, Castle Master II, the Crypt. Tel 061- 368 3607.

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SERVICES

LISTINGS, lots of them on 3" disk. Mostly games or graphics, some from 1985, for £3.00 only, from Angela Allum, 22 Point Royal, Bracknell RG12 7HH.

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FREE, yes totally free. A copy of our super disk based magazine, "CPC Domain". Just send disk and stamped return envelope to CPC Domain, 20 Montague Road, Saltford, Bristol, BS18 3LA.

AMSTRAD ADDICT disk based fanzine. All aspects of CPC: each issue gives letters, free software, reviews, features, much more. Send £1.25 + disk cheque/PO to J. A. Gollogly, Killabrick, Carrickmacross, Co Monaghan, Ireland. Tel (042) 63787

Other

POWER PD, new PD library. 50p per disk. Write or phone for catalogue, 33 East Lane, Sandiway, Northwich, Cheshire CW8 2QQ. Tel (0606) 882343. Also bi-monthly fanzine £1.

EXPLOSIVE FUN (the diskzine). It's got short stories, jokes, reviews etc. Send 50p a disk and a s.a.e. to Tom Dean, 53 High Lane, Burslem, S.O.T., Staffs, ST6 7DF hurry!

MATURE (464) beginner needs penpals to give general help and swap tapes. Mrs Andrea Haagensen, 14 Conway Ave, Grimsby, South Humberside, DN34 4HZ.

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Power Up

ACTION TEST pages 44-49 • REPLAY RUNDOWN pages 56-57 • CHEAT MODE pages 51-54

It's the January issue and STILL Nigel Mansell's Grand Prix isn't here! But we've still got a sackload of reviews, and here's the Review Crew to tell you about 'em...



Linda Barker

Linda Barker's editor of *Your Sinclair*, *Amstrad Action's* sister mag. Oh look, she's just walked through the door this very minute. What did you think of those two Ocean compilations, Linda? "The bloomin' bank wouldn't give me any money!" Er, yes, but what about those compilations? "Oh, oright, I suppose. Didn't think much of *Pit Fighter*, though. I'm going to phone the manager, that's what I'm going to do..."



Rich Pelley

Rich is a fashion guru. He specialises in those baggy T-shirts with stripes, and trousers you could stick a tent pole up and camp under. He's doing an art foundation course at college, though, which probably explains it. What did you think of *Crystal Kingdom Dizzy*, Rich? "Oh, hey man, well, you know it's like all the others, man. Dizzy's not cool any more. Man." He had to think about it a lot before he told us that, though.



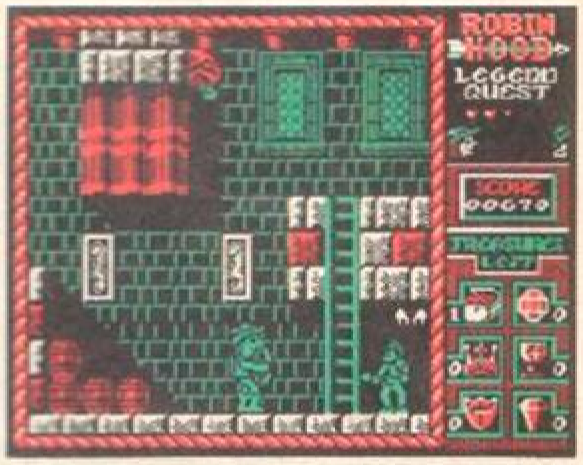
Jon Pillar

Jon is a Spectrum fan. He adores them. He eats, drinks and breathes Spectrums. So how come you're playing an Amstrad game, Jon? "It's a Speccy port." Why did we ask? So what did you think of *Robin Hood: Legend Quest*, then? "I prefer the Errol Flynn version, the one with Basil Rathbone in it." Yes, but what about the game, Jon? "Oh, I liked it. I liked it a lot. Almost as good as a Speccy game." We had to ask, didn't we?

Reviewed this month



CRYSTAL KINGDOM DIZZY 72%



ROBIN HOOD: LEGEND QUEST 79%
SUPER FIGHTER 55%
THE DREAM TEAM 71%

The hit parade

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1 NEW ZEALAND STORY
Hit Squad • 76% (AA73)

2	BUBBLE BOBBLE Hit Squad.....................71% (AA74)	11	LEMMINGS • Psygnosis 97% (AA82)
3	BATMAN - MOVIE • Hit Squad....94% (AA74)	12	NARCO POLICE • GBH 56% (AA85)
4	MAGICLAND DIZZY • C/Masters 85% (AA64)	13	DIZZY D T RAPIDS • C/Masters..29% (AA82)
5	TOTAL RECALL • Hit Squad.........90% (AA85)	14	DIZZY'S EX ADV • C/Masters 74% (AA76)
6	SHADOW WARRIORS • H Squad .65% (AA82)	15	MULTIMIXX 5 • Kixx................Not reviewed
7	1ST DIV MANAGER • C/Masters.54% (AA83)	16	USA TT WRESTLING • Zeppelin ..74% (AA85)
8	GOLDEN AXE • Tronix 58% (AA75)	17	ROBOCOP • Hit Squad 84% (AA78)
9	RAINBOW ISLANDS • Hit Squad..89% (AA78)	18	MANCHESTER UNITED • GBH.....69% (AA81)
10	4 GAME PACK • Atlantis...........Not reviewed	19	FANTASY WOR DIZZY • Codies ..89% (AA52)
		20	HARD DRIVIN' • Hit Squad 62% (AA78)

Action replay

RUNDOWN PART 3

SDI • Shadow of the Beast • Shadow Warriors • Shaolin's Road • Skate Wars • Slapfight • Star Wars • Strider • STUN Runner • Stunt Car Racer • Super Hang On • Super Monaco Grand Prix • Super Scramble Simulator • Supercars • Switchblade • Target Renegade • The Empire Strikes Back • The Games – Winter Edition • The Real Ghostbusters • The Spy Who Loved Me • The Untouchables • The Vindicator • Thunder Blade • Tiger Road • Toobin' • Total Recall • Toyota Celica GT Rally • Turbo Out Run • Turrican • Turrican 2 • Vendetta • Vigilante • Vindicators • WEC Le Mans • Wonder Boy • World Games • X-Out • Xenon • Xybots

Crystal King

Codemasters ■ 0926 814132 ■ £9.99 cassette only

Our old pal Dizzy stars in his twelfth game – unbelievable, isn't it? RICH PELLEY certainly finds it hard to swallow...

For the purpose of this review, let's just ignore those people who think that the *Dizzy* games are all the same. "They're all the same," they'll point out. "There's a lot that can be done with the arcade adventure, yet the *Dizzy* series hardly seems to make a scratch on the surface of the genre. *Dizzy One*; what did you do? You walked around, picked up and used objects, and somersaulted over things. And that's was it. *Dizzy Twelve*; and and what do you do? You still pick up and use objects, walk around and somersault over things. And that's still it."

Other people may try to fob you off with allegations that the puzzles are totally obvious anyway, with no suitable improvement being made in this latest escapade. Would you have thought to give Denzil the screwdriver after he tells you that he has lost his tools? And would you have fathomed the connection between the spanner, the broken generator and the fact that Dora's electricity keeps going off? The answer is most probably: probably.

On the other hand, would the prospect of using the the whip to lasso yourself past an otherwise impossible jump have sprung to mind? (It took me ages to figure this out). Come to think of it, would you have found the whip in the first place? It's in one of the houses, which on this one occasion is entered through the window rather than the door (this took me even longer). For the most part the puzzles in *Crystal Kingdom Dizzy* are brain-blendingly obvious, with the odd obscure one thrown in for what Codemasters' seem to term good measure (as this is not the first time an obscurity complaint has been made of a Dizzy game). And when I say obscure I mean obscure – if (by trial and error) you actually stumble upon the correct solution, the chances are you'll be left thinking "Eh?" as opposed to slapping yourself on the forehead thinking "Of course!" as it should be.

So what does this mean? It means that the game is far too simplistic, that's what. The only



Coo, look – it's Denzil's House! Now all you have to do is work out how to reach it...

Hey look, it's the whole of Level 2!

Crystal Kingdom Dizzy is split into five levels, and each one is quite a size. Here's how to find your way around number 2...



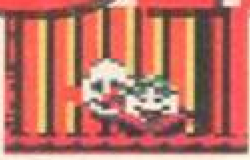


Mind your step when you get off the boat. Dolphins aren't always friendly!



Dylan's invited you into his house. Dig that groovy wallpaper! (Yuk!)

gdom Dizzy





method of death is neatly provided by the arcade element, but this, as ever, is low and restricted to timing your way over the occasional snake or bird. This lack of opportunities for death, the ease of puzzles and overall familiarity can only account for *Dizzy's* instant playability and even more instant addictiveness. This in turn could be a problem – how long really before you finish the game? Hours rather than days, maybe.

Let's not pay any attention to any Tom, Dick or Harry who tells you that there has been little improvement over the six games either. During the series the playing area map may have become a little larger, the graphics a shade prettier, and your sprite a little cute-er but has anything major changed? Have any new concepts or ideas been employed? No, not really.

So that's the people who think all the *Dizzy* games are all the same and far too easy out of the way. Any one still reading? Over the age of ten? Well, get lost then. We all know that *Dizzy* games are supposed to be for 'The Younger Player' – this is why they sell so many. The Younger Player doesn't want any element of surprise, or innovation. The Younger Player wants the familiarity of any other *Dizzy* game so he or she can dive right on in there.

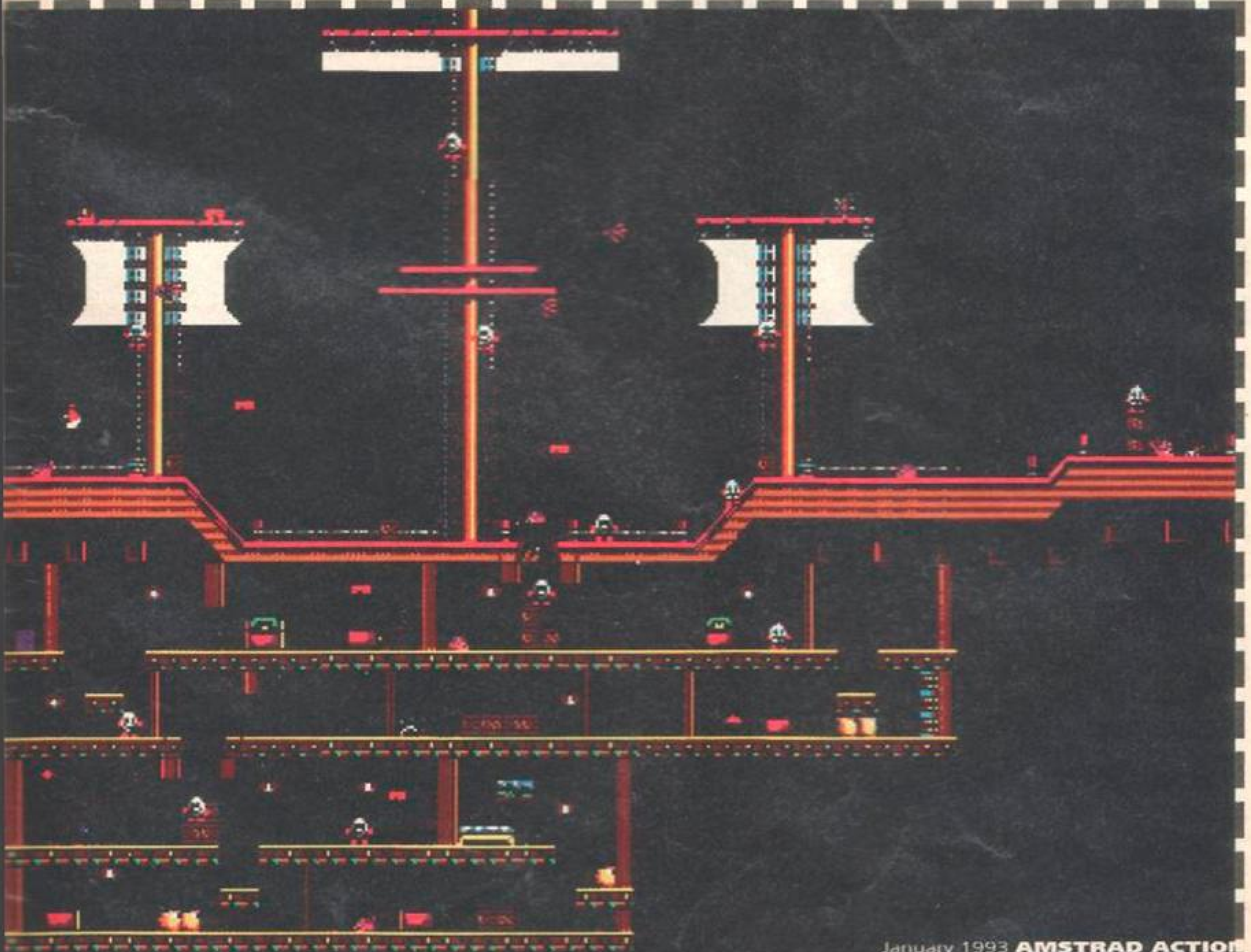
So that leaves a bewildering few still urging for a little more information about this latest *Dizzy* game. The plot? The ancient treasure of Zeffer has been stolen and a dreaded curse is about to be put over the kingdom. You must firstly find this out from Grand Dizzy at the end of level one, then plough your way through the remaining three levels in order to reach the treasure and return it to the sacred shrine.

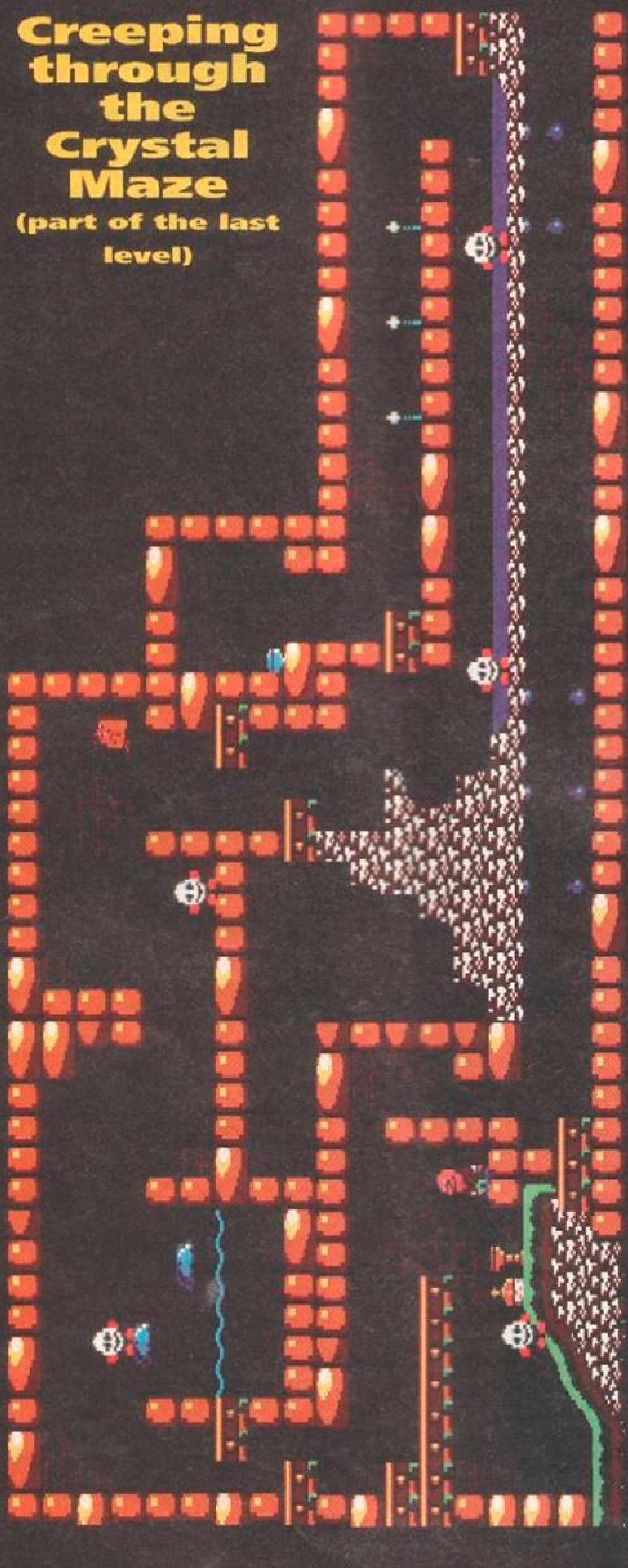
And the levels? There are four (level two is mapped below to give you an idea of the size of each) with an accessing password to each. Sure, it might add to playability, but wasn't this a seriously life-span reducing move?

And now the big question. So why ten quid? I pondered this for some time and have now, I think you'll agree, reached quite an impressive conclusion. *Dizzy* games, it seems, have ended up in the same category as Status Quo singles. They come out regularly. Check. It's quite hard to tell the difference between the latest and the last (check), except for one notable anomaly (Codemasters tried to flog us the rather poor *Bubble/Panic Dizzy* games, whilst Status Quo

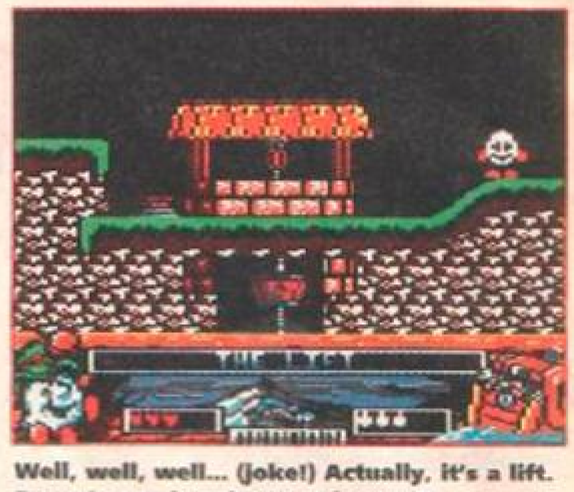


Dizzy's in cloud-cuckoo land. But there are points to be collected all the same...





Creeping through the Crystal Maze (part of the last level)



Well, well, well... (joke!) Actually, it's a lift. But where's it going to take you?

released *In The Army Now*). You can't actually find anyone who will admit to liking them either, yet they always sell tons, get into the charts and stay there for ages. Both the Codies (and Status Quo) seem to have hit upon a winning formula...

But who is going to buy this new *Dizzy* game for three times the usual price? Codemasters would be wrong to stop writing the *Dizzy* gamese, but at six quid more? The *Dizzy* series may have been feasible budget material, but will it still hold water as a full pricer?

Right then. We've safely eliminated any people who think the *Dizzy* games are all the same, far too easy, have made no considerable improvement over the series and are over the age of ten. And we've said Goodbye to anyone who is frankly appalled that this game has been put out for a tenner. So who does that leave? Er... The true *Dizzy* fan, to whom I can say that *Crystal Kingdom Dizzy* is, as expected, "Absolutely Brilliant", "The Best Dizzy Game Yet," and probably even "Unmissable".

And for four quid we could probably ignore everybody else and give it a high mark. But when it's being sold for a tenner? It's down at least twenty percent for that, I'm afraid.

VERDICT

GRAPHICS — **94%**
Cor, it's in mode 0, which means lots of colours. It's utterly cute and cuddly, and not that blocky, either

SONICS — **73%**
Reasonably informative effects and a happy title tune. What more could you expect?

GRAB FACTOR — **84%**
Dizzy games always have been addictive. They're easy to play and it's obvious what you've got to do

STAYING POWER — **41%**
But it's all a bit simple, isn't it? Youngsters might find it more challenging but the rest will finish it fast

The slickest Dizzy game yet, but a bit on the easy side and utterly, utterly unoriginal.

RATING 72%

Robin Hood: Legend Quest

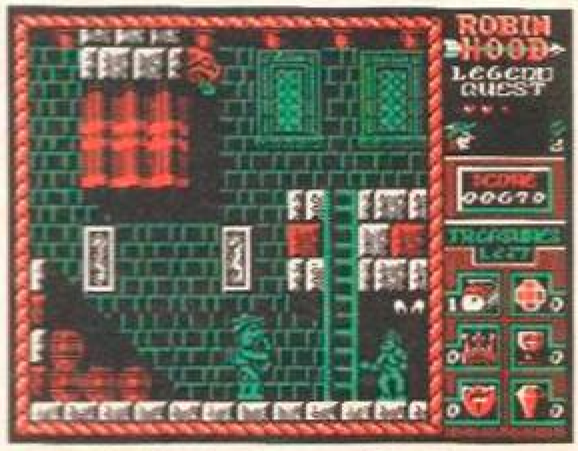
Codemasters ■ 0926 814132 ■ £3.99 cassette only

That hat! That jerkin! Those tights! But who said reviewers had to be stylish? JON PILLAR takes on the Normans. Huzzah!

You can keep your Kevin Costners and Patrick Bergins. You can hold onto your Richard Greenes rather tightly, and you can even hide that fellow from the British Telecom ads of a few years back in the cupboard under the stairs and swear blind you haven't one in the house even though the inspector's registered it on his handheld detector and besides you've foolishly left a bow and several arrows hanging on the washing line. As far as I'm concerned, the only Robin Hood worth the name was Errol Flynn. Who could possibly disagree that the 1938 film with Errol battling Basil Rathbone as Sir Guy of Gisbourne is the best ever swashbuckler to hit the silver screen? Only incredibly stupid, tasteless, cloddish people with no sense of grandeur and all the cinematic appreciation of a dead penguin. But enough of this ribaldry – on to the game.

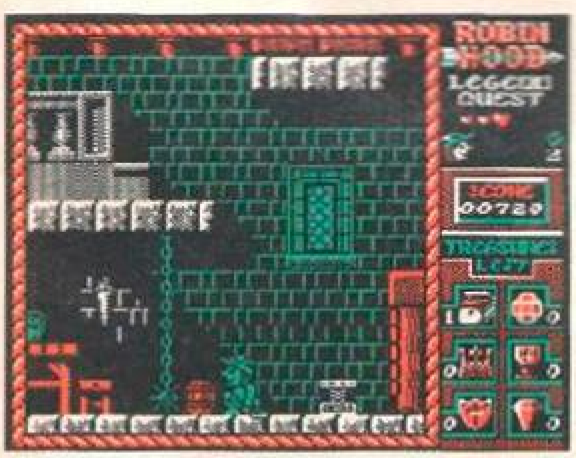
In *Robin Hood: Legend Quest*, the game, and not the famous Michael Curtiz film of a similar name but without the subtitle and a big 'The Adventures Of' before the main character's name, Maid Marian's been locked up in Nottingham Castle by the Sheriff. Cue lots of running, jumping, opening of doors and shooting things as Robin attempts to rescue her. Yes, we're talking platform antics here, with the castle being divided into several sections, each of which is sub-divided into rooms by the simple expedient of bunging a locked door in your path whenever you try to go somewhere interesting. So you have to collect various keys to open the doors, to fight the villains to dodge the traps to grab the keys... and so on. You don't know which key opens which door, so hilarious complications can ensue as you run all over the place trying to find the one you've just unlocked.

Robin Hood is littered with friendly features to keep the game flowing along. For a start you can fire on the run – a stab at the fire button and Robin draws his bow, pauses a moment and lets go. Secondly, and most importantly, the game does away with all known physical laws and allows you to change direction in mid-jump, grab hold of ladders as you fall past and leap back to safety if you run off the end of a platform, not to mention surviving three nasty wounds before losing a life. Very slick. Once you switch your brain into This Does Not Reflect Reality mode, playing Robin becomes a dreamy, fast-paced and not at all annoying affair. Unlike some platformers, where you have to edge forwards to see if there's anything nasty waiting, with Robin you can just charge about at a healthy lick, loosing arrows at knavish rogues and springing over midget guards with gay abandon. Tremendously swashbuckly. (But no swordplay, though.)

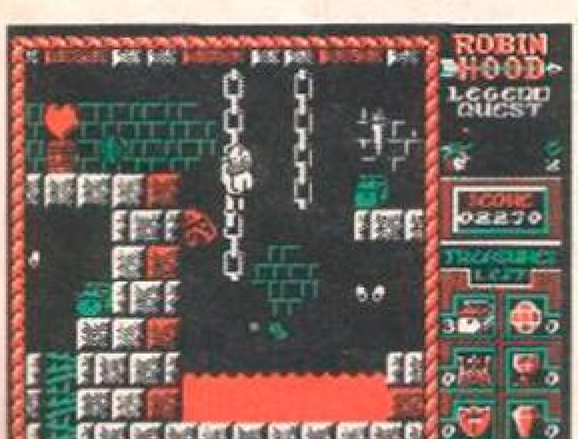


Ha! Taste the steely arrow of justice, Norman oppressor person. Ha! Ho! (Etc.)

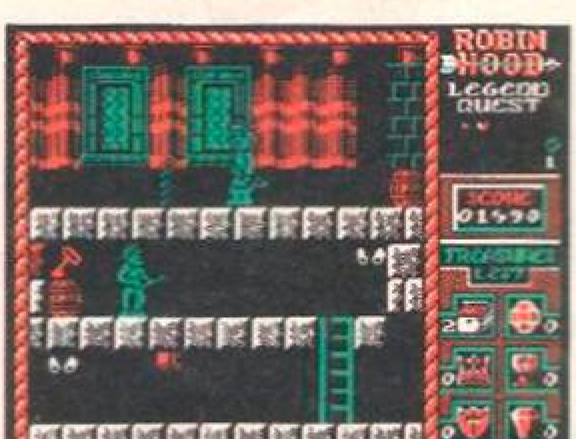
The presentation has been given a good polishing as well. Robin insists on grinning out of the screen at you after leaping about for a bit, and whenever an arrow hits its mark it explodes in a lovely glittery bang. There is also a load of useless but enticingly valuable treasure to lure you into exceptionally dangerous parts of the castle. Tragically, the whole effect is struck with great force and crazed rather badly by the game being a Speccy port. And a Speccy port with a horribly jerky screen at that. The thing is, aren't CPC games supposed to be in colour...?



One of the smartest bits is running then ducking – you sort of slide along like this.



Believe it or not, this is one of the easiest screens on Level Two. Really it is.



Robin pauses by the curtains to smirk at the player. He's a smug frogger and no mistake.

VERDICT

GRAPHICS 65%
Clear and detailed but as colourful as a dog's-eye-view of an outstandingly bland macintosh.

SONICS 60%
Usual chip music but some jolly nice crunchy spot effects.. There are some clicky noises too sometimes

GRAB FACTOR 88%
Easy to pick up. Equally easy to put down, but if you've loaded it you might as well play it

STAYING POWER 78%
Grates when you get killed and a chore to go back through earlier levels. Lots of incentive to keep at it

An excitingly addictive platform game which will seize you in a nasty headlock until you beat it. A pity they didn't do a proper CPC version

RATING 79%

SUPER FIGHTER

Ocean ■ 061 832 6633 ■ £14.99 cass, £19.99 disk

Super Fighter, eh? Three smart games, or what? LINDA BARKER puts on her combat trousers and gets in on the act...

Super Fighter. The image that immediately springs to mind is of a box packed with some of the best fighting games ever to grace our humble monitors. Games in which you do battle against the forces of evil in a sometimes suicidal bid to uphold the forces of good and truth. Instead we are faced with *Pit-Fighter* – a game based on an illegal and incredibly bloody so-called sport; *Final Fight* – a clone of hundreds of other walking-along-a-street-and-killing-everyone-you see games; and *WWF Wrestlemania* – a hurl and pin fest for today's less bloodthirsty youth. Hmmm...

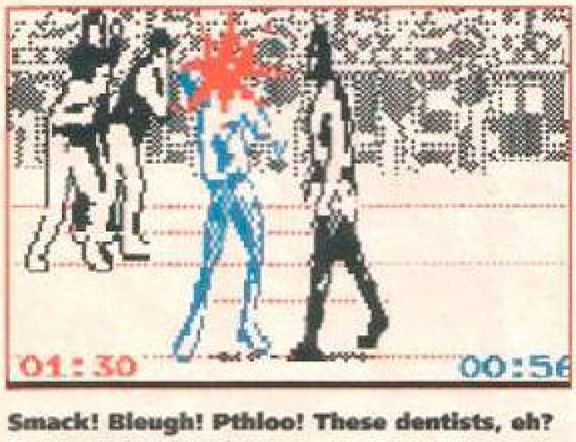
Pit-Fighter

Let's start with the worst, then things can only get better. (*You're hopeful, aren't you? – ed*) Pit-fighting, apparently, is the "world's favourite illegal sport" involving, blood, guts, obligatory foul play and almost certain death. This decidedly unattractive plot is coupled with an equally unattractive control system. So not only do you get your brains kicked out of your head, but it's nevertheless blimmin' difficult to do the same to your opponent.

You have the choice of three characters, each one as unsavoury as the other. Ty is an agile kickboxer who can perform the interesting-sounding move known as the roundhouse. Kato is a speedy and experienced karate blackbelt who can combo punch and used to be a wrestler.

As soon as you walk out into the pit the trouble starts. The graphics are appalling, the character sprites are more like badly animated line drawings and then there's the gameplay. It's crap. Basically.

20%



Smack! Bleugh! Pthloo! These dentists, eh? So unprofessional!



No, Final Fight isn't one of those coloured-block-sliding games. That's a sprite...

WWF Wrestlemania

The best of the *Super Fighter* lot is *WWF Wrestlemania*. When it first appeared, this was one of the best wrestling games that had been seen in a while. Since that time we've had Zeppelin's *Tag Team Wrestling* which was actually a bit better.

Just as in the previous two games, there's three characters to choose from, each with their own special move, – Hulk Hogan, Ultimate Warrior and British Bulldog. Whichever tightly-corseted hero you choose, you'll have to face five very nasty and incredibly evil opponents. The idea is to pin the nasties to the floor, and to make sure that they really suffer. The graphics are nice and clear with little colour clash and the gameplay is easy to get into – for a while. Unfortunately, *WWF Wrestlemania* hasn't proved as enduring as was first hoped, but it's a nice little wrestling game and the only good thing about this compilation. It also sprints into second place in the Dream Team pack. Bit cheeky it's on both compilations, though!

80%



One of thes ugly geezers could be you!



Final Fight. Under the dustbin you'll find a hamburger. You can always mush it into the face of one of these charmers.

Final Fight (128K only)

This one's a bit better, with big, blocky characters and loads of colour. Again, there's a choice of three players – 37 year old ninjitsu aficionado Guy; 35 year old Cody, who's good with knives, and 50 year old ex-champion wrestler, Haggar. I don't know why we're told their ages. (There's probably some point in all this that I'm completely missing.)

Anyway, you choose a fighter and go out into the street, you kill anyone who passes you, and pick up any hamburgers and weapons. The control method here is the best to be found in all three games. It's easy to play and you can work out how to perform your special moves without too much trouble.

The thing is, it's all a bit too easy. Within seconds of starting your morning constitutional you'll have killed about three trillion baddies, eaten seventy five hamburgers and collected enough instruments of assault to equip the army of a middle-sized country. Not only that, the graphics, although colourful, are a bit too blocky to be convincing.

50%

OVERALL VERDICT

In a compilation one usually hopes for at least one good game. Unfortunately, *WWF Wrestlemania* isn't good enough to make up for the awfulness of *Final Fight* and *Pit-Fighter*. Avoid like the plague. (Unless, of course, you happen to be partial to pus-filled boils under your armpits.)

55%

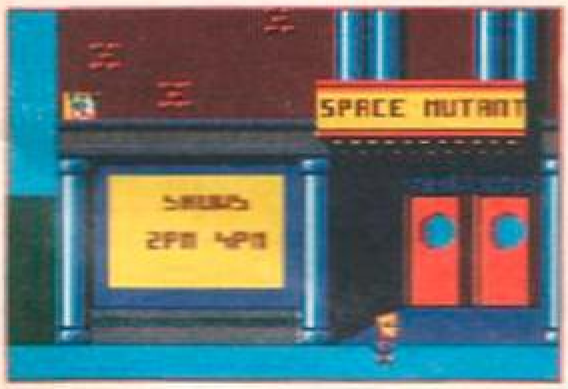
THE DREAM TEAM

Ocean ■ 061 832 6633 ■ £14.99 cass, £19.99 disk

Three games on a compilation's a bit measly, isn't it? Ah yes, but perhaps Ocean are putting quality before quantity. LINDA BARKER isn't convinced...

Ocean have tapped into our heads and read our dreams. What they found there was a hotch potch of pile drives, sequinned briefs, minor acts of juvenile delinquency, skateboarding, helicopter shooting, men made of liquid metal and explosions. (*You should get your mind looked at, you strange girl – ed*)

They've mixed up all these ingredients and come up with three games to satisfy some primeval urge in each of us. Or have they? (*I knew you were going to say that – ed*) What they've come up with is in fact a fairly good package. *WWF Wrestlemania* is reviewed opposite, as part of the *Super Fighter* compilation. And that's another cheeky thing, putting the same game on two compilations released simultaneously...!



Look at that! Nice colours, nice big blocky buildings and a sweet little Bart. Ah!

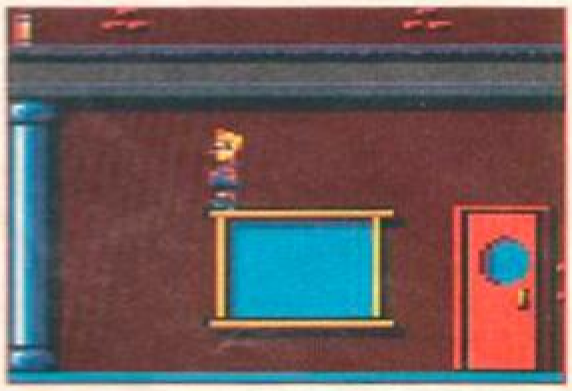
The Simpsons Bart Vs The Space Mutants

This is an arcade conversion, horizontally scrolling beat and collect-'em-up. It's simply animated in clear, bright colours and it looks great.

It's your job, as Bart Simpson, to rid Springfield of a bunch of nasty purple-loving aliens who are intent on taking over the bodies of respectable citizens. The idea is to collect cans of spray paint and spray anything purple, then it'll be worthless to the aliens, see. Bart's also got to collect coins so he can buy things, and round things with letters on. If these letters can be joined together to make up the name of one of Bart's family then you're onto a good thing. Y'see, other Simpsons come in very handy later on.Oh, I almost forgot – you've got to jump on the aliens. Make sure you don't kick any harmless grannies or you'll lose a life or two. With five levels there's enough here to keep any joov occupied for hours. And that Bart, eh? What a sweetie!



Uh oh, the screen's gone all yellow. That means you've got all your X-ray specs on.



The graphics are on the simplistic side, but then so's the Simpsons cartoon!

Adam and Rod both objected to *Bart Vs The Space Mutants* on the grounds that it was old fashioned. The graphics may be bright and blocky, but they really work. The simplicity of the game is perfect, after all – it is a cartoon character that we're dealing with here. *The Simpsons* cartoon is very basic, which is part of its appeal. It seems obvious that any programmer would choose to animate a game in the same way. It's called consistency. (*Yeah, all right, all right – ed*) It's a great game to play with a good helping of that addictive ingredient that nine out of ten games players prefer.

85%

Terminator 2 (128K only)

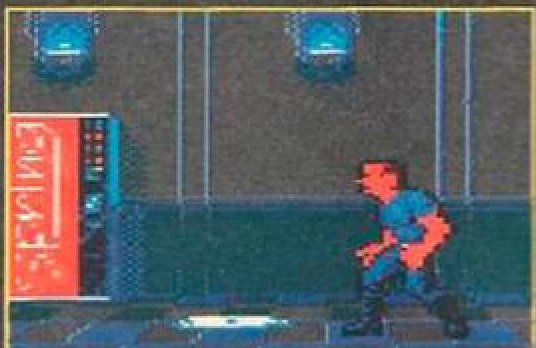
The game of the movie is a strange thing. No matter how beaut the film is, the game is often a real let down. *Terminator 2* is no exception to this, admittedly very general, rule. It's not a bad game exactly, it just isn't as good as it could be.

Terminator 2 is really three games in one, there's your basic beat-'em-up, a car chase bit and a puzzle bit. The beat-the-T1000 bit is the least entertaining and the control system loses it points. Y'see, you can't simply move forwards or backwards, you have to wiggle the joystick and move very gradually, say a millimetre at a time. It's so blimmin' frustrating!

The road bits are far more exciting, there's the bit where you and John try to escape on a motorbike from the T1000 in his lorry. Oh, and then there's the bit where you, John and Sarah are in a van and the T1000's trying to gun you down in his helicopter. Agh! The puzzle bits are pretty straightforward, but there's a pretty tough time limit.

In fact, *Terminator 2* is a pretty tough game, and it looks good too. What really lets it down though is the control system, you'll need a pretty good joystick or three if you want to play this one for any length of time. Oh, and a 128K CPC, for that matter.

72%



Eh? Whassup? Where's 'e gone? The T1000 disguises himself as molten metal.

OVERALL VERDICT

Dream Team is a much better buy than *Super Fighter*, mainly because all three of the games included are quite good. If you're looking for something to buy with all that Chrimbo cash, you needn't look much further than this. Ah, but remember the old days, when compilations had fire or six games?

71%

Cheat Mode

Phil Howard is a man with a mission. His mission is to cheat his way through every Amstrad game ever written. And here is this month's onslaught... don't forget, send YOUR tips to Cheat Mode, Amstrad Action, Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW. The best win £10!

Can this really be another Christmas issue? It seems like only yesterday, as a boy, that I skipped to the newsagent clutching my bright shiny sixpence and bought my first ever copy of *Amstrad Action*. Now, just 88 issues, and an incredible twist of fate later, here I am actually getting together your Christmas cheating cheer. Ah! and who would have dreamed after all these years I would be here at 2 in the morning, overdue, overdrawn and working (*you and me both – Ed*). Yep, it's true, there is no Santa Claus!

Forbidden Planet

Jamie Harris of Millom has discovered a peculiarity with the covertape game *Forbidden Planet*. If you start playing the game then press the keys 1,2 and 3 down simultaneously you will enter a secret game. You, being the white blob, have to collect as many Fs as you can before the Alien beasty appears. You then exit through the hollow blob. Keep on doing this until you die. Nice find, Jamie, but is it part of the proper game?



Lemmings

Just in case you haven't managed to get to see all the levels on the *AA83* covertape demo of *Lemmings*, Justin Williams of Haverfordwest has discovered a built-in cheat. To activate it, press the keys ESC, TAB, CAPS LOCK, SHIFT, CONTROL and A together and the level number will increase.

Incidentally, the counter will actually go up to level 99, but sad to say there are only 4 on the tape! (*What do you want, blood? – Ed*) If you want to see the rest of them, well, you're just going to have to buy the game, aren't you?

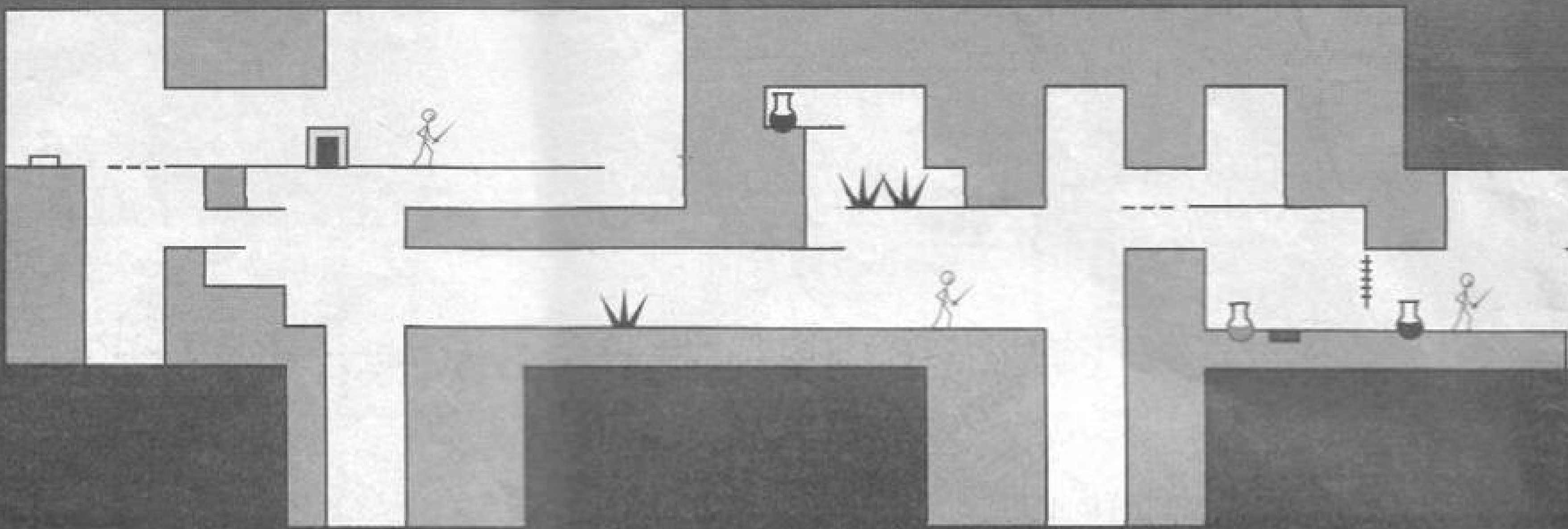
Biff – the complete solution

£10 WINNER

The name Peter Curgenven keeps cropping up in all things CPC. This time he has produced a complete solution and a multiface poke for the game Biff. I think you're about due a prize this time, Pete.

Multiface poke for inf energy 95AC = 00

1. Go left and pick up the power card.
2. Go right, pick up the wire cutters and climb the tree.
3. At the top of the tree, use the power card and the wire cutters.
4. Go left and get the rope from the room.
5. Go down the tree, left and use the rope to make a bridge.
6. Go left left and pick up the old clothes.
7. Go left and make a scarecrow in the field.
8. Go left and get the chocolate seeds.
9. Go right to the field and plant the chocolate seeds.
10. Go right back to the top of the tree and give the chocolates to mum.
11. Go down the tree, left and pick up the axe.
12. Go left and then chop down the chocolate tree.
13. Go left and build bridge.
14. Go left and collect the oil, the key and the explosives.
15. Go left and use oil and key on the lock.
16. Go down the mine and use the explosives on the wall.
17. Leave the mine, go right and get the batteries.
18. Go left, get the torch, go right and return to the mine.
19. Go right use the torch and get the jewel.
20. Leave the mine, go left and get the broken ring. Repair the ring.
21. Go left, return to the tree, and give the ring to mum.
22. Go right and get the empty glass.
23. Go down the tree, go right, fill the glass at the well, go right and get the record.
24. Go left, heading back to the tree, then give the glass of water and the record to mum.
25. Go down the tree, then left, get the matches and the banger.
26. Light the banger (ice cream now on sale).
27. Go right and get the coin.
28. Go to the ice cream van and use the coin to buy ice cream.
29. Go left with ice cream and lit banger, then pick up flower seeds.
30. Go left return to the tree and give mum the ice cream.
31. Go down the tree, right, and pick up the flower pot.
32. Go left and pick up bug spray, the go left to the field.
33. Use the flower seeds, flower pot, and bug spray to grow rose.
34. Go right and give the rose to mum.



Prince of Persia map Level 2

We'll assume you can already hack your way through Level 1 on this graphical masterpiece. So here's a map of Level 2, thanks to John Lumsden of Maidenhead. Look out for further instalments!

Wild West Seymour – the complete solution!

Did someone say there was a new Seymour game kicking about? Stuck supporters stand by for the complete solution to Wild West Seymour (apparently lots of you found it too easy – come on Codies what's happened to that cutting edge?).

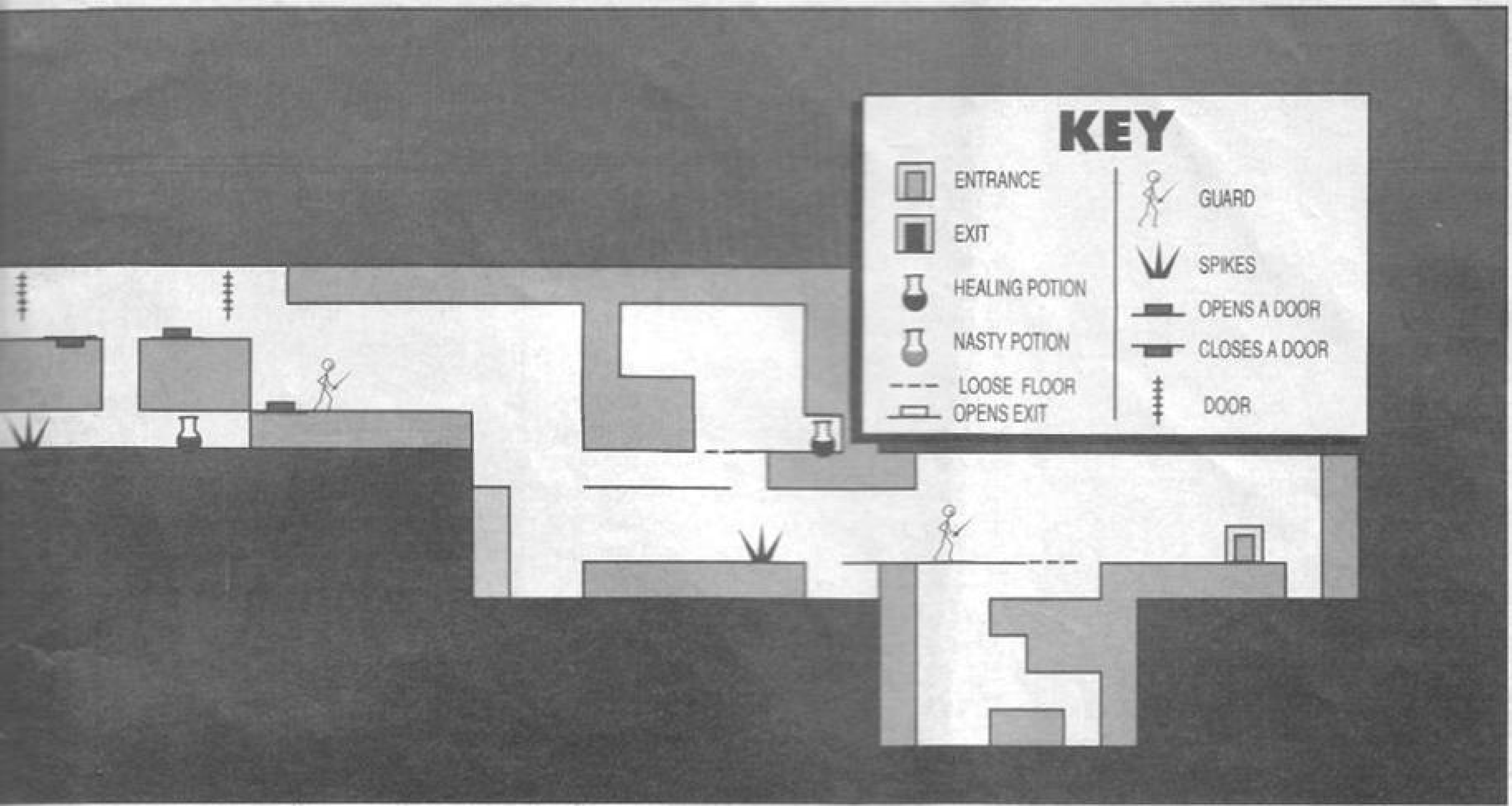
£10 WINNER Solutions were sent in by Ryan and Sean Davis, Chris Simmons, Gavin Watson, Christopher Akers, Timothy Hoyland, David Kilcoyne, Jonathon Wheal, James Henry, Matthew Craven, Nigel Shipp, Stephen Buckle, Stuart Hook, Charlotte and David Brady Jonathan Bradbury, Richard Dobson, Simon Pert, Jonathan Lewis and Graham Smith (I've heard that name before somewhere).But the lucky winners are – rustle, rustle – Charlotte and David Brady (and their mum), of Glenrothes. Well done, chaps! They have left out what everything does to keep you amused. Keep on trying, everyone else, and thanks for all your efforts.

Act 1 - Leamington

1. Talk to Rich Eddy, get and read the note.
2. Go right into Al's shed, get the magic-looking seeds, get the plunger. Plant the seeds in the vase.
3. Go outside and left to the Codies' Headquarters and talk to Clare. Get the remote control beside her desk. Drop the note, go right.
4. Enter Dave's office and use the remote control. Climb up and press Fire on Dave's plane. Get the battery pack. Go left and leave Dave's office.
5. Enter lift , go up then left and enter the darkroom.
6. Press Fire at the at the sink. Drop plunger and get the key. Drop the remote control. Get the spotlight and put it in the dark blue tray. Get the can of film and leave the darkroom.
7. Go right and enter the lift. Go down and talk to Clare.
8. Leave the Codies' HQ and go to the Big Red Bus. Press Fire at the engine. Jump up and enter the bus. Press Fire at the drivers seat.
9. Exit and talk to the Game Genie. Re-enter the bus.
10. Talk to Pete, drop the key, take the camera and go back to the Codies' HQ.
11. Enter, go up the lift and into the darkroom. Go to the switch and press Fire; the light should go on (red light).



Seymour's not such a tough cookie (or potato!) after all – here's a complete solution.



12. Put the film into the camera and then put the battery pack in. Pick up the spotlight.
13. Go to Dave's office, open his safe and collect the piece of paper.
14. Go back to the Big Red Bus and start it up. Give the piece of paper to the Game Genie and get the begonia.
15. Enter the bus and give the camera to Pete. Put the camera spotlight into the bus.
16. Go to the Codies' HQ and give the begonia to Clare. Leave and re-enter HQ.
17. Talk to Clare and get the script.
18. Go to Dave's office and get the microphone.
19. Go to the bus and drop the microphone and the script off.
20. Go to the top and out of the window. Jump on to the trees, on to the cloud, on to the Codies' roof, and onto Al's shed roof. Get the groovey movie clapperboard.
21. Go back to the bus, start the engine and away you go!

Act 2 - The New World (code 21D135008)

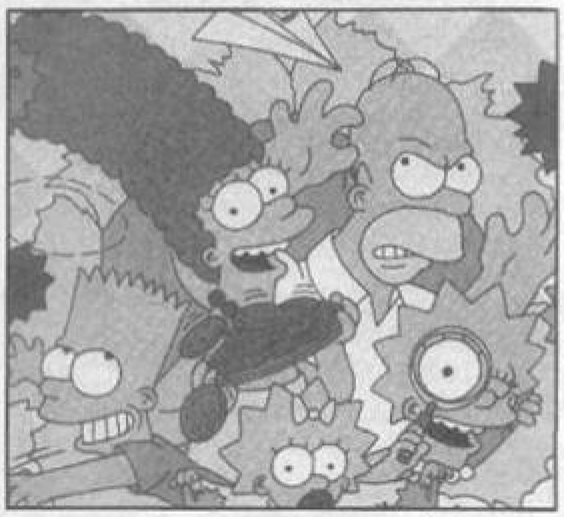
22. Go left to Shy Dan's General Store. Go to the coloured door and press Fire.
23. Leave the store and go left to the telegraph office. Get the brush, enter the office and talk to Sam.
24. Go back to Dan's Store, sweep the rubbish and go back to the door. Press Fire, get the dollar and the rail ticket.
25. Drop the brush and go to the telegraph office. Jump on the window sill and then on to the photo booth.
26. Press Fire at the face then quickly stand in front of the two doors and wait for the flash.
27. Leave and re-enter the office, talk to Sam. Go back to Dan's Store and sweep up, go to the door and get the railcard.
28. Go to the top of the store and go left, jump left then walk left and keep going.
29. Jump left and collect the key from the telegraph post.
30. Go right and jump onto ledge, jump right and right again, walk right and jump onto a tree.
31. Jump left, left then left again. Go to the clock and press Fire. Keep pressing Fire, go to the left edge and fall off.
32. Go to Dan's Store and get the dollar.
33. Go to the telegraph office, put the dollar into the slot, stand in front of the two doors and wait for the the flash.
34. Go out and back in then talk to Sam.
35. Get the photo, go left out of the screen and talk to the railmaster.
36. Get on the train and press Fire.

Act 3 - Train Trouble (code 10C700068)

37. Go right and jump on to the chair, jump up and press Fire on the first aid box to get elastoplast, then do it again to get scissors.
38. Jump right and read the note, drop the note and jump left, collect the harmonica.
39. Go left until you reach the coal cart, jump up on to it and press Fire.
40. Drop the elastoplast, go to the back of the train and press Fire.
41. Walk left until you get to the tumbleweed.
42. Go back to the train. Press Fire at the engine, collect the elastoplast. Jump right and walk right. Jump over the gap and keep walking.
43. Press Fire at the snake, walk to the pickaxe and drop the harmonica, get the pickaxe.
44. Walk right and drop down the hole. Go to the right hand edge of the gold cart and jump. Walk right and jump again.
45. Press Fire on the red wall. Drop the elastoplast. Go left and keep going until you reach the hollow hills.
46. At the end press Fire. Go down the hole and talk to the Game Genie.
47. Go left and talk to Ham Polo, give him the scissors.
48. Go back to the Game Genie. Press Fire.
49. Go to the Sandy Shack and talk to the man. Drop the runestone.
50. Go back down the gold mine, go right and press Fire, get the chunk of gold.
51. Jump on the gold cart and jump right, get the elastoplast.
52. Exit the goldmine and go back to the sandy shack and get the bucket.
53. Go back to the gold mine, go down the hole, go to the water and press Fire.
54. Press Fire at the Game Genie, go left and get the Cuban cigar.
55. Go to the front of the engine and press Fire, go to the back of the engine and press Fire.

Act 4 - The Lonesome Trail (code 238A35008)

56. Go left, get the pin and fall down the bridge.
57. Go right and get the crate of whisky.
58. Walk left and talk to Al Engels, go right and talk to the Injun.
59. Go right until you the second wigwam, press Fire then go to the third wigwam and get the water wings.
60. Go left and back to Al, talk to him.
61. Go right and walk through the water, get the spade and return to Al.
62. Go to grave and press Fire, get rain spell.
63. Go right to second wigwam and press Fire.
64. Go right through the water.
65. At the beginning of last screen, press Fire, go out then back in and pick up some crops.
66. Go back to second wigwam and press Fire.



Skip a dip in the pool in The Simpsons...



How to get more ammo for Billy the Kid...

The Simpsons

Simon Thompson of Shrewsbury has spotted that on the second level of *The Simpsons*, if you jump 3 times on the second block above the toxic pool you will be taken across the entire pool.

Billy the Kid

Peter Liddell of Innerleithen suggests that in *Billy the Kid* on the first level after the qualifying stage if you fire continuously before the next stage you will get lots more ammo.

£10 WINNER City Slicker

Neil Leggett of Peacehaven in Sussex has been messing around with the "excellent" (*oi, you being cheeky? – ed*) *City Slicker* game from the *AA84* covertape and spotted a really useful keypress cheat. Pause the game then type SHERLOCKHOLMES and the screen will flash. You can then move around locations, also your energy will be replenished. Thanks, Neil.

£10 WINNER Tankbusters

Stephen Matthews of Kings Lynn has been at the keyboard again and found a keypress for *Q10 Tankbusters*. Type your name in as SALMAN then press 1 to advance a level, 2 to get 9 lives, and 3 to get extra firepower.

Drehdriss

On the covertape game *Drehdriss*, whilst playing, press the up-cursor and the [key to advance a level.

Supercars

Chris Bibby of Eldwick has discovered a cheat for *Supercars*. Get a high score then enter your name as FASTEST – you will go to class 3.



Want to advance levels in Superman?

Superman

Lee Rouanne of Kelstedge has found a keypress cheat for *Superman*. Press 1 on any screen to advance a level. This cheat and quite a few others (I'll pinch some more later) come from a pretty splendid fanzine Lee has just launched called *Alive & Kicking*. For more info, contact Lee at: **3 Causeway House, Kelstedge, Ashover, Chesterfield S45 ODW** (tel: 0246 590636, before 10pm).

Multiface under the mistletoe

Ageing meddler Stephen Matthews of Kings Lynn and fanzine fanatic Lee Rouane of Kesledge are totally responsible for this months festive batch of Multiface finds...

NAME		ADDRESS	POKE	EFFECT
Green Beret	(t)	2507	00	Inf Lives
Kung Fu Master	(t)	6A25	00	Inf lives
Cybernoid	(t)	0227	FF	255 lives
Gryzor	(t)	01DD	00	Never die
Turbo Outrun	(t)	15ED	00	Inf creds
Space harrier 2	(t)	1003	00	100 lives
Marauder	(t)	030E	F0	250 lives
Herb's Dum run	(t)	0204	00	Inf energy
Miami Cobra GT	(t)	C7C8	00	Inf time
Project Future	(t)	9564	FF}	255 lives
		9B9D	FF}	
Spitfire	(t)	1B2A	00	Inf spits
Shinobi	(t)	15B7	65	100 lives
		1407	00	Inf time
Ironman	(t)	8913	00	Inf conts
Arkanoid	(t)	20FE	00	Inf lives
Billy the Kid	(t)	81C9	00	Inf ammo
		92CA	10	one shot
Captain Dynamo	(t)	460F	50	80 lives
1943	(t)	7A21	A7	Inf energy
Eagles Nest	(t)	1AE3	00	Inf Keys
Combat Lynx	(t)	5899	00	Number of choppers
Artura	(d)	218B	00	Inf energy
Chuckie egg	(t)	9B5B	00	Inf lives
Chuckie egg 2	(t)	67C2	FF	255 lives
Titus the Fox	(d)	1F7A	FF}	255 lives
		2147	FF}	
		2011	FF	255 energy
Tau Ceti	(t)	10B0	00	Inf lives
Steel Eagle	(t)	1B98	A7	Inf lives
Elite	(t/d)	4611	00	Inf missls
		7401	00	Inf fuel
Power drift	(d)	2A82	FF	255 lives

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When the **MULTIFACE** was launched in 1986, it was an outright winner. No one has ever come up with such a powerful, useful add-on. Labeled *the* ***ESSENTIAL CPC COMPANION***, this **MULTI**purpose inter**FACE** proved to be an absolute Godsend for the Amstrad CPC users. Remember the first disk drive on the CPC 464? Suddenly the loading took seconds rather than minutes from tapes. Except that there was not much to load - very little had originally been released on disks and there was no facility to transfer programs from tapes to disks.

THE SAVIOUR

This is one area where the **MULTIFACE** saved everything - literally. The black magic box could stop anything any time and **SAVE** it to disk or tape. When the 6128 came with a built-in drive, it was left again to the **MULTIFACE** to do all the transferring - and to perform other miracles...

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ACTION!

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INFINITE LIVES

listed in this magazine and you'll *never* loose. The MULTIFACE comes with a built-in **TOOLKIT** that lets you inspect/alter/dump the CPC RAM. It also has its own 8K RAM and 8K ROM. Many top programs were written with the aid of the TOOLKIT and the extra 8K RAM. And do you like the **screen shots** in this magazine? They are all produced using the **MULTIFACE**!

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What can you get for £3.99 these days, eh? Quite a lot, as it happens... here's the final part of our Replay Rundown, a list of all those full-price games of yesteryear now on budget

Action replay

RUNDOWN PART 3



S.D.I. Hit Squad • 63%

Remember Ronnie Reagan's 'Star Wars' defence system? Remember Ronnie Reagan? Anyway, *SDI* is based on these orbiting satellites, like, wot fire lasers at marauding enemy craft. The tricky bit is that you have to control both the satellite and the laser cross-hairs. The other tricky bit is not throwing your joystick out of the window in frustration. Jolly enough, but distinctly fiddly.

SHADOW OF THE BEAST GBH • 88%

The Amiga version caused a terrific stir, with it's multi-coloured graphics, parallax scrolling and what have you. Needless to say, these didn't make it on to the Amstrad. Gremlin nevertheless produced an original and highly detailed explore-and-shoote-em-up. Only four colours (if that!) but oodles of detail and class.

SHADOW WARRIORS Hit Squad • 60%

There's not much skill involved in this pretty standard horizontally-scrolling beat-em-up. There's not too much plot, either. The baddies aren't particularly difficult to despatch, unless they gang up on you, and the end-of-level guardians don't take too much softening up, either. All in all, about as interesting as a Big Mac without the relish.

SHAOLIN'S ROAD Hit Squad • 62%

Or *Yie-Ar Kung Fu II*, only they couldn't call it that. It's a pretty ancient martial arts beat-em-up on levels a couple of screens wide but with some platforms to leap around on. You can pick up extra weapons now and again and take on some extra 'ard bosses, but there's not much else to relieve the tedium. OK, but not inspiring.

SKATE WARS Hit Squad • 81%

Ubi Soft have turned out some great little CPC games, and this is one of their best. There's nothing grand about it, it's just a combat-skating sim where you try to score goals against an armoured opponent on an ice rink that becomes increasingly filled with hazards. Terrific two-player fun, even if it is a little short on depth.



SLAPFIGHT Hit Squad • 75%

A great little shoot-em-up for its time (the Dark Ages) but nothing special these days. It's more than tough enough to tax any shoot-em-up expert – some would say it's simply *too* tough – with enough gameplay to last you yonks. Don't expect to be utterly enthralled, though.

STAR WARS Hit Squad • 46%

Pow, pow, pow... whoosh... pow, pow, pow... there's more to listen to than there is to look at in this vector-graphic classic. It seemed like a jolly good blast at the time, but it all looks about as thin as a BR buttie now.

STRIDER Kixx • 84%

A mode 1 arcade conversion? Brilliant choice – it makes it possible to include loads of detail and great animation. You miss out on the extra colours, of course, but when you're trying to convert an arcade game to an 8-bit computer, that's the least of your problems. Strider is a Russian acrobat leaping and somersaulting his way through several levels of baddies and guardians. Simple stuff, but well programmed and very playable. Buy it!

STUN RUNNER Hit Squad • 40%

The arcade original was fun for a while. Basically, you had to guide your little car (or whatever) down various multicoloured tunnels and tracks. The best thing about it was the speed – the gameplay was pitiful. So what was lost during the conversion to the Amstrad? Yup – the sense of speed. Oh dear.

STUNT CAR RACER Kixx • 86%

Only marginally more on-screen detail than when your monitor's turned off, but this helps the game's tremendous speed. You race around various elevated roller-coaster courses trying (not surprisingly) not to fall off, whilst beating the pants off the other competitors. About as deep as your average paddling pool, but compulsive racing fun.

SUPER HANG ON Hit Squad • 65%

Great fun in the arcades, but it slows down a bit on the way to the Amstrad. A bit jerky and a bit slow, but playable enough nonethless. Come to think of it, there hasn't been a better motorcycle racing game since.

SUPER MONACO GP Kixx • 65%

A luvverly game in the arcades, thanks to the 6cwt of hardware inside the cabinet driving it along. It's a pity, then, that the CPC has only got about 6oz. A brave attempt, but doomed from the start. Confusing, blocky graphics, dodgy sound and screen updates every 35 minutes (or so it seems) are the result. It's still quite playable, but only once you've slid into a coma.

SUPER SCRAMBLE SIMULATOR Kixx • 79%



Much maligned when it first came out (*AA47*, 39%), *Super Scramble Simulator* is actually quite decent, sort of. OK, so it's not actually riveting stuff for arcade fans, but it is actually a rather good scrambling simulator. You need to be a bit handy with a keyboard, but then riding motorcycles over everyday objects is none too easy either.

SUPERCARS GBH • 91%

Gosh, takes you right back to the original *Super Sprint*, this one. Only the cars are bigger, the courses are better-looking, there's a better gradation of difficulty and there's added gameplay (you can buy better cars with your prize money). Gremlin did it in mode 1, as well, which means loads of detail. Excellent.

SWITCHBLADE GBH • 90%

A great, great game on the console, but what's it like on the ordinary tape/disk machines? Damn near as good, in fact. Superbly detailed graphics, a huge playing area and gameplay that can be picked up in seconds. Brilliant.

TARGET RENEGADE Hit Squad • 86%

A mode 0 horizontally-scrolling beat-em-up that actually moves along at a decent enough pace and is well animated. There's loads of gratuitous violence, a fair amount of humour and a rather jolly simultaneous two-player mode. Recommended.

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK Hit Squad • 51%

Hmm... well it didn't strike back very hard. The original *Star Wars* looks pretty dated now, but this sequel looks worse still. You use vector graphics (rather than filled 3D) to get speed, right? Pity *The Empire Strikes Back* raced along like a knackered Skoda then. Dull, dull, dull.

THE GAMES – WINTER EDITION Kixx • 59%

Lots to look at but not so much to actually do. These multi-event wagglers were popular for a time – loads of players could 'compete', but instead of several different games under one banner, you got several different pitiful apologies for games.

There were exceptions, but this wasn't one of them.

THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS Hit Squad • 63%

Run, shoot and dodge your way through a landscape filled with things you've got to run at, shoot and dodge. It's fun for a while and moves pretty well, but there's not much depth to it all. There's a simultaneous two-player mode that's good for a laugh.

THE SPY WHO LOVED ME Hit Squad • 52%

Does anybody watch Bond films any more? They're basically slick, dull, repetitive relics of the '70s. The same applies to Domark's *Bond* conversions. They're competently done but dull to play, with some irritating gameplay glitches. Avoid.

THE UNTOUCHABLES Hit Squad • 90%

Ocean have long been masters of the film conversion. They – wisely – often opt for the Amstrad's four-colour mode, too. *The Untouchables* is very, er, blue throughout, but still looks good. It follows the usual Ocean formula of levels composed of scenes-from-the-film. Good stuff.

THE VINDICATOR Hit Squad • 78%

This is the sort of game they used to write for the Amstrad. It's a scrolling explore-em-up in a pseudo-3D complex where you have to find, dodge and destroy aliens as well as solving more than a few puzzles. The controls are a bit tricky and hard to follow, but apart from that it's a great blast from the past.

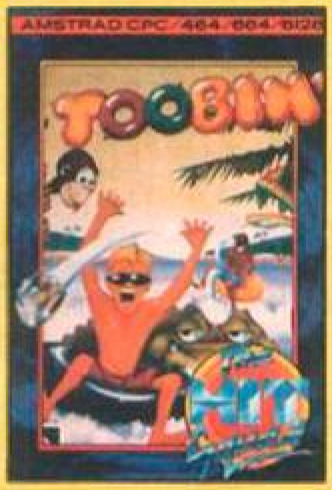
THUNDER BLADE Kixx • 62%

Remember the excitement when this first appeared in the [illegible]es? Remember the irritation when you realised there really wasn't much to do except fly around shooting and getting shot? Remember the despondency when you realised you'd spent all your pocket money on the darned thing? At least the arcade version had spanky graphics, though – the CPC version looks like an explosion in a multicoloured brick factory. Very poor.

TIGER ROAD Kixx • 62%

Yet another horizontally-scrolling ninja-style kick-em-up. It looks like it's suffering from arthritis these days, though, but it's still fun to play. Do you really need to know the plot? No, probably not.

TOOBIN' Hit Squad • 61%



The sun's out, the sky's blue, the weather's fine... let's run down to the river and jump into an old inner tube! Pardon? Not the first thing that comes to your mind? No, not to ours, either. Similarly, if you get a bit of spare time to play a game on your CPC, *Toobin'* isn't the first game that would come to mind. It's a laid-back seen-from-above vertical scroller that has you floating down a croc-infested river trying not to get punctures or get snagged on obstructions. Interesting for a short time, but that's about all.

TOTAL RECALL Hit Squad • 75%

Another Ocean movie licence and as predictably competent as all the rest. And that's the trouble, really, it's just like all the rest. Various scenes from the film are re-enacted on your CPC, with you taking Arnie's part. OK, for Arnie fans, OK for arcade game fans, OK for everyone, really. Ho hum.

TOYOTA CELICA GT RALLY GBH • 66%

Incredibly difficult rally-driving sim that looks like it's going to be terrific once you've mastered it. You soon work out, though, that that could take about a hundred years. The basic problem is that you go fishtailing off into the scenery within ten seconds of starting, because every attempt to correct a slide generates an even more horrible one in the opposite direction. Ouch!

TURBO OUT RUN Kixx • 55%

If you can find an Out Run machine in the arcades today, you'll see just how far arcade technology has moved on since then. The same goes for the CPC version of the game. *Turbo Out Run* is the sequel, but it doesn't really do much about the game's inherent dullness. The Americans drive on multi-lane freeways which are wider than most of our roads are long. Yawn.

TURRICAN Kixx • 92%

Following hard on the heels of *X-Out*, *Turrican* was another terrific shoot-em-up from Rainbow Arts. This time you control a bloke in a tin suit who has to leap from platform to platform, exploring his way across a world packed with horrible and unpredictable enemies. The graphics are great, the gameplay is even better.

TURRICAN 2 Kixx • 92%

Yup, it's even better than *Turrican 1*. Having said that, it's really only better by degree. There's not much here that's new. So, as they say, if you liked the original, you'll love this. However, once you've played *Turri 1* to death, *Turrican 2* could be a bit of a bore. It's just more of the same basically, no matter how good. On its own, though, an excellent release.

VENDETTA Kixx • 48%

Coo... an isometric 3D ninja kick-em-up with oodles of exploring and puzzles. Sounds great – in principle. Rather like a five-year-old Lada. The mono graphics aren't the real problem. Instead, it's the fiddly control and exceptionally dull gameplay that eventually (after about five minutes) grinds you down.

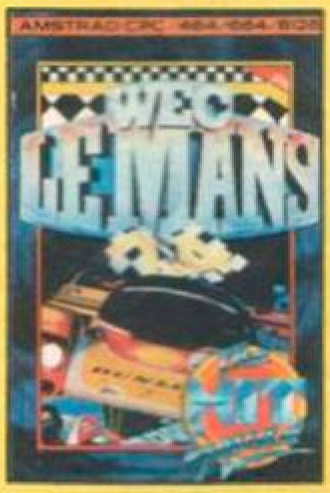
VIGILANTE Kixx • 52%

A blocky, horizontally-scrolling beat-em-up from the Gary Mason school of combat. In other words, you lumber up to your opponent and smack him round the ear until he falls over. Or you do. Your hero in *Vigilante*, like Gary Mason, is not generally the one to fall over, so you should make some progress with practice. Now all you have to do is find the will to keep on playing this turgid plod.

VINDICATORS Hit Squad • 90%

A terrific seen-from-above shoot-em-up where you (and your tank) knock knock hell out of the Tangent empire. Not much variety, but loads of arcade-quality action and loads of ground to cover. The graphics are terrific and there's a fun simultaneous two-player mode too. Great stuff. Just don't expect much of a plot...

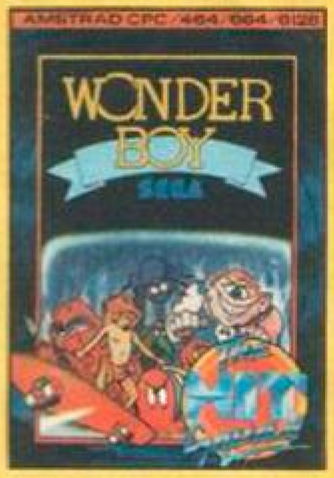
WEC LE MANS Hit Squad • 70%



You know something, this old Ocean game looks like Ocean's cartridge game *Burnin' Rubber*. A coincidence, surely? It plays just as well, too – better, if anything. OK, so the graphics are distinctly monochrome by comparison, but the racing (in a Le Mans-style car) is at least as fast (maybe faster) and pretty smooth. Not much to do, though, except race around and crash now and then.

WONDER BOY Hit Squad • 68%

Remember the arcade version? That's going back a few years, isn't it? So's the gameplay. It's all standard platformy arcady stuff with a series of levels to solve and bosses to beat. Actually, although it's ancient



it's still pretty decent, although not a perfect conversion

WORLD GAMES Kixx • 70%

Oh no, it's another one of those multi-event sports 'simulators'. There's some pretty weird events, too. Barrel-jumping? Cliff diving? Log-rolling? Quite good fun, but nothing special.

X-OUT Kixx • 92%

X-Out stands out for three reasons: it looks terrific, it moves superbly... and it's inordinately tough! It's a horizontally-scrolling shoot-em-up with the added element of a 'shop' level where you can buy extra weapons. And blimey, do you need 'em! Too tough for most, but one of the best blasts ever.

XENON Tronix • 57%

A great game on the other formats, but not on the Amstrad. Xenon looks great from the screen shots, but it shuffles along at such a pathetic pace it's more of a puzzle game than an arcade game. The puzzle being whether you've got time to make a cup of tea before that bullet reaches you. Mind you, there's such a lot of hot lead flying about the screen, it'd be impossible at normal speed.

XYBOTS Hit Squad • 58%

The graphics, look like those colouring-in books before they've been coloured in. Your job is to plod around a maze of corridors shooting enemy robots (or 'xybots'). Indefinitely. A bit of a bore, to say the least. The split-screen simultaneous two-player mode livens things up, but only in as much as you can now scamper around taking pot-shots at each other. Which isn't really the idea at all.

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Next Month

Only 28 days in February this year, folks. So not long to read all this stuff...

Hacking it to bits

Europe is crawling with CPC hackers. You'll find them in France, Britain, Germany and beyond. Only you *won't* find them, because they're hiding. The *AA* special investigations team goes underground to discover the truth about the activities of the leading Euro-hackers. The full shocking story!



We investigate the hacking scene...

The name of the game

Due to unforeseen non-seen things, *Nigel Mansell's World Championship* (covertape demo and review) didn't make it in time for this issue, which means it will be in next month's, or we'll want to know why. (And no doubt those Gremlin people will tell us.). Also in this ish will be the return of *Action Replay*, lots of Christmas releases, and maybe even *Streetfighter 2*...!



Nigel Mansell's Grand Prix: finished in time?

A load of DOS

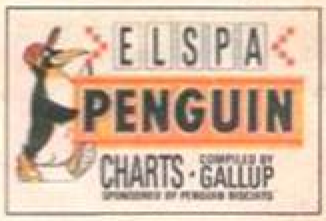
Thinking of buying a 3.5-inch disk drive? The drives themselves are very similar, but the suppliers produce their own operating systems. We test systems from Siren, Avatar, SD Micros and others.



All 3.5-inch disk drives are NOT the same...

Galluping ahead

How are the CPC charts featured in *AA* put together? How is all that information gathered and collated? We drop in on Gallup House to find out exactly how Britain's leading chartsters operate. How does your purchase of a game in a software store in Redditch help that game climb the national charts? Find out in our feature next issue.



February issue on sale January 28th

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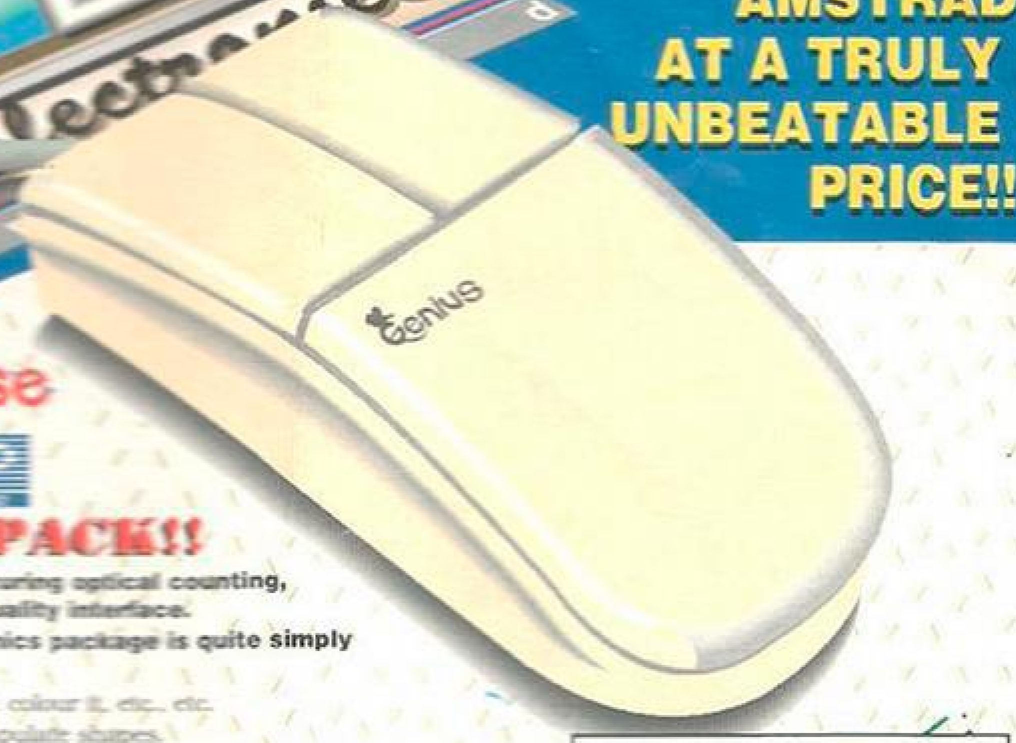
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